













Mecca

  
*Librarian*

**Uttarpara Joykrishna Public Library**  
**Govt. of West Bengal**



# MECCA.



Near the gate Bab es Salem, a few daily take their seat, with their paper and ready to write for any applicant, letters, accounts, contracts, amulets, billet-doux, or any similar documents. They are principally employed by the Bedouins, and demand an exorbitant remuneration. One species of inviolable property belonging to the mosque are the flocks of wild pigeons with which Mecca abounds, and which nobody dares venture to kill. Several small stone basins are regularly filled with water for their use; and as it is considered an act of piety to feed them, there are women who expose corn and dhourra for sale on small straw mats, and who occasionally embrace the opportunity of intriguing with the pilgrims, under the pretence of selling them corn for the sacred pigeons.

The service of the Temple employs a vast number of people, consisting of khatibs, imams, muftis, muezzins, ulemas, eunuchs, lamplighters, metowafs or guides, with a host of other menial servants, all of whom receive regular pay from the mosque, besides their share of the presents made to it by the hajjis. The first officer is the Naib el Haram or guardian, who keeps the keys of the Kaaba, and superintends the repairs of the building. Burckhardt says he was one of the few of the time, only families descended from the first Koreish who still remained in Mecca.

246 ag

BM3461



who performs the Hajj

They lay freely about the city. Their number exceeds

most of them are negroes or copper-coloured Indians. The aga is a personage of great importance, entitled to sit in the presence of the pasha and the sheriff.

The revenue of the mosque is considerable, although it has been deprived of the best branches of its income. There are few towns or districts in the Turkish empire in which it does not possess property in land or houses ; but the annual amount is often withheld by the provincial governors, or diminished by the number of hands through which it passes. Formerly the sultans of Egypt and Constantinople sent it large sums every year ; but at present it is reduced to a state of comparative poverty. Notwithstanding the stories about its riches, it possesses no treasures except a few golden lamps. The history of the Beitullah has occupied the pens of many learned Arabs ; but in its construction it differs little from many other buildings of the same kind in Asia. Those of Aleppo, Damascus, and Cairo, are exactly on the same plan, with an arched colonnade round an open square.

The inhabitants of Mecca may all be called foreigners or the offspring of foreigners, except a few Hejaz Bedouins or their descendants, who have settled there. Though a mixed population, they have nearly the same manners, and wear the same dress ; so little tenacious are they of their national customs. There are few families in moderate circumstances that do not keep slaves ; the male and female servants are negroes ; and most of the wealthier inhabitants, in addition to their lawful wives, keep Abyssinian mistresses. It is considered disgraceful to sell a concubine : if she bears a child, and the master has not already four legally-married wives,

he takes her in matrimony ; if not, she remains in his house for life ; and in some instances the number of concubines, old and young, is increased to several dozens. The middling and lower classes make a lucrative traffic in young Abyssinians, whom they bring up on speculation, and sell to strangers.

The Meccawees are very expensive in their houses ; the rooms being embellished with fine carpets, and abundance of cushions and sofas covered with brocade. Their furniture is costly,—their tables well supplied,—and in receiving visits, which are frequent, every mistress makes it her endeavour to surpass her acquaintances in show and magnificence. The great merchants, most of whom have country-residences at Jidda or Taïf, live very splendidly, maintaining an establishment of fifty or sixty persons. Every native delicacy is to be found at their tables ; the china and glass ware in which the viands are served up are of the best quality ; rose-water is sprinkled on the beards of the guests after dinner ; and the room is filled with the odours of aloes-wood. The usual custom is two meals daily,—one before mid-day, the other after sunset. Their mutton is of inferior quality ; they hardly know the existence of fish ; and their pot-herbs are brought from Taïf and other neighbouring places.

In personal appearance the Meccawees are thin rather than robust ; their features are expressive, particularly in the vivacity and brilliancy of the eyes ; their colour is a yellowish sickly brown, lighter or darker according to the origin of the mother, who in many cases is an Abyssinian slave. The lower classes are stout and muscular ; but the numerous retainers of the Temple appear to be the most meagre and ema-

ciated beings imaginable. Ali Bey represents them as absolutely walking skeletons, clothed with a parchment to cover their bones. From their lean and scraggy frame, their hollow cheeks, large sunken eyes, shrivelled legs and arms, they might be mistaken for true anatomical models; and but for the prospective felicities of Paradise, their existence on earth would seem intolerable.

One singular practice has been remarked by travellers, that all the male natives both of Mecca and Jidda, except Bedouins, are tattooed in a particular way, which is performed by their parents when they are forty days old. It is called *meskalé*, and consists of three long incisions down both cheeks, and two on the right temple, the scars of which remain through life. Instead of a deformity this is reckoned a beauty; and they pride themselves on a local distinction, which precludes the other inhabitants of Hejaz from claiming in foreign countries the honour of being born in the holy cities. This tattooing is very seldom inflicted on female children.

In disposition the Meecewees are lively; in the streets, bazaars, and even in the mosque itself, they love to laugh and joke. In talking or dealing with each other they often introduce proverbs, puns, and witty allusions; and as they possess, with all this vivacity of temper, much intellect, sagacity, and suavity of manners, their conversation is very agreeable; so that whoever cultivates even a merely superficial acquaintance with them seldom fails to be delighted with their character. They have a natural politeness, which they display not only to strangers, but in their daily intercourse with each other. In exchanging civilities on the streets, the young man

kisses the hand of the elder, and the inferior that of his superior in rank ; while the latter returns the compliment by a salute on the forehead. Individuals of equal rank and age in the middle classes mutually kiss each other's hand. In the ceremony of shaking hands they lay hold of the thumb with the whole hand, pressing it, and again opening the hand three or four times : this is said to have been the practice of Mohammed.

The vices of pilfering and theft are not prevalent at Mecca ; robberies are seldom heard of ; although rogues avail themselves of such opportunities during the pilgrimage, and are tempted by the negligence of the inhabitants in not using locks or bars. The streets abound with beggars, who are entirely supported by the charity of strangers. Many adopt mendicity as a profession, and have a ready stock of pious sentences which they address to all passengers. Some of them are extremely importunate, and demand alms in a tone of authority little accordant with their condition. Mecca is called the paradise of beggars, and this may account both for the number and the insolence of that class. The Meccawees are proud of being natives of the Holy City and countrymen of their Prophet. In this respect they consider themselves favoured beyond all other nations, and under the special care of Providence. The consequence is, that they are haughty and intolerant towards Christians and Jews, who profess a different creed ; and though they do not openly persecute them, their name is always coupled with some opprobrious and contemptuous epithet. The sincerity of their own profession, however, does not correspond with their outward zeal. Such of them as have no particular



interest in assuming the appearance of extreme strictness are very negligent in observing both the forms and precepts of their religion, thinking it enough to utter pious ejaculations in public, or comply in trivial matters. In imitation of the Prophet, their mustachios are cut short, and their beard kept regularly under the scissors; in like manner they allow the ends of the turban to fall loosely over the cap; they put antimony on their eyelids, and have always a *messouak* or toothbrush in their hands, because such was the custom of Mohammed. They know by heart many passages of the Koran and the sacred traditions, and quote or allude to them every moment; but they forget that these precepts were given for rules of conduct, and not for mere repetition. They excuse themselves from the duty of almsgiving, by saying that Providence ordained them to receive charity, not to bestow it; and instead of attending the Friday's prayers, as every Moslem is bound to do, the mosque is filled chiefly with strangers, while the inhabitants are seen smoking in their shops. The law prohibiting wine is evaded, so as to become almost a dead letter. Intoxicating liquors are sold at the very gates of the Temple; neither the sanctity of the place nor the solemn injunctions of the Koran can deter them from indulging in all the excesses which are the usual consequences of drunkenness. The Indian fleet imports large quantities of *raki* in barrels; and when mixed with sugar and an extract of cinnamon, it is sold under the name of cinnamon-water. The rich merchants, ulemas, and grandees, are in the habit of drinking this liquor, which they persuade themselves is neither wine nor brandy, and therefore not pro-

hibited by the law. The less wealthy inhabitants, who cannot purchase so dear a commodity, use a fermented liquor made of raisins, while the lower classes drink *bouza*. Tobacco, hashish, and other intoxicating substances, are openly smoked, and cards played in almost every coffeehouse.

The inhabitants of Mecca have but two kinds of employment,—trade and the service of the Beitullah. Many of the latter calling, which may be said to include one-half of the population, engage privately in commercial affairs; but the greater proportion have no other support than their wages, or what they can extort from the charity of pilgrims. The most impudent, idle, and worthless individuals, adopt the profession of guides; and as there is no want of these qualities, nor of a sufficient demand for their services, this class of rogues is very numerous. They besiege strangers with their importunities from morn to night; invite themselves to eat and drink at their expense; and generally contrive in a month to wheedle from the simplicity or piety of their employers as much as will suffice for the expense of their families during the remainder of the year. The position of Mecca, as it is not situated in the direct route to any country of consequence, and surrounded with perpetual sterility, is unfavourable to commerce; and but for its being the centre of the religious enthusiasm of the Moslem world, it must have long ago sunk into poverty and insignificance. In ordinary times there is a considerable trade with the Bedouins and inhabitants of Nejed who are in want of India goods, drugs, and articles of dress. The less opulent merchants usually employ their capital in the traffic of corn and provisions; and,

though the Pasha of Egypt has made these articles a strict monopoly of his own, the grain-dealers, after paying freight, have usually a profit of fifteen or twenty per cent. The consumption of this species of commodity, it may be observed, is much greater in Arabia than in any of the surrounding countries ; the great mass of the people living almost entirely on wheat, barley, lentils, or rice ; using few vegetables, but a great deal of butter and spicery.

The natural disadvantages of the place are counterbalanced by a source of opulence possessed by no other city in the world. During the pilgrimage, and for some months preceding it, the magazines of foreign commerce are opened as it were by thousands of wealthy hajjis, who bring the productions of every Moslem country to Jidda, either by sea or across the desert, exchanging them with one another, or receiving from the native merchants the goods of India and Arabia, which the latter have accumulated the whole year in their warehouses. At this period Mecca becomes one of the largest fairs in the East, and certainly the most interesting, from the variety of nations that frequent it. The value of the exports is, however, greatly superior to that of the imports, and requires a considerable balance in dollars and sequins, part of which find their way to Yemen and India, and about one-fourth remains in the hands of the Meccawees. So profitable is this trade, that goods brought from Jidda yield a clear gain varying from thirty to fifty per cent.

Much profit is also fraudulently made ; great numbers of pilgrims are ignorant of the Arabic language, and are in consequence placed at the mercy of brokers or interpreters, who are generally Indians,

and never fail to make them pay dearly for their services. It is a practice with dealers, when they wish to conceal their business from others, to join their right hands under the corner of the gown or wide sleeve; where, by touching the different joints of the fingers, they note the numerals, and thus silently conclude the bargain. The wealth that annually flows into Mecca might render it one of the richest cities in the East, were it not for the prodigal and dissipated habits of the people, especially of the lower orders, who are loose and disorderly spendthrifts, squandering away their gains in dress, gluttony, and the grossest gratifications. Marriage and circumcision feasts are celebrated in a very splendid style; so that a poor man will sometimes in one day throw away the expenditure of half a year.

It is owing to their dependence on foreign commerce that the arts and sciences are so little cultivated at Mecca. Travellers have remarked how few artisans inhabit its streets,—such as masons, carpenters, tailors, or shoemakers, and these are inferior in skill to the same class in other parts of the country. With the exception of a few potteries and dye-houses there is not a single manufactory. There are braziers for working in copper, and tinsmiths, who make small vessels for the hajjis to carry away some of the Zemzem water; but not a man is to be found capable of engraving an inscription, or fabricating a lock and key. All the doors are fastened with large wooden bolts; and the skill of the cutler is only adequate to the manufacture of matchlocks, lances, and halberds, which are forged in the rudest manner; a hole in the ground serving for a furnace, and one or two goat-skins, waved before the fire,

supplying the place of bellows. The swords, watches, and other hardware to be found in the bazāars, are imported from Europe. In different shops are sold strings of coral and false pearls, rosaries made of aloe, sandal, or kalambar wood, brilliant necklaces of cut carnelions, seals, rings, and similar jewellery; but all these are kept by Indian merchants. Here, too, are to be seen grocers, druggists, tobaccoists, haberdashers, sandal-makers, and a great many dealers in old clothes. There are a few large flour-mills worked by horses; but the common practice is to use hand-mills, which are usually turned by women or the slaves of the family.

It cannot be expected that learning can flourish in a place where every mind is occupied in the search of gain or of paradise; and in this respect Mecca is perhaps inferior to any city of equal population in the East. The whole knowledge of the inhabitants is confined to reading the Koran, and writing but indifferently. There are no public libraries, and not a single school or seminary; the mosque being the only place where boys are taught the elementary parts of education. Children from their infancy learn to repeat prayers and ceremonies; but this is merely to make money by officiating as guides to the pilgrims. The crafts of bookselling and book-binding are of course unknown. The language of the Meccawees, however, is still more pure and elegant, both in phraseology and pronunciation, than that of any other town where Arabic is spoken. It approaches nearest to the old written Arabic, and is free from those affectations and perversions of the original sense which abound in other provinces. As the sciences form no lucrative profession, they are in

consequence totally neglected. The astronomer of the mosque learns to know the exact time of the sun's passing the meridian, to regulate the hours of prayer; and the few druggists, or venders of medicine, deal in nothing but miraculous balsams and infallible elixirs; their potions are all sweet and agreeable, while the musk or aloes-wood which they burn in their shops diffuses a delicious odour that tends to establish their reputation.

As for the number of inhabitants in Mecca, travellers have found it very difficult to calculate with any degree of certainty; registers are never kept, and even the amount of houses is not ascertained. In former times it is said to have contained more than 100,000 souls; and when sacked by the Karmathian chief in 936, his ferocious soldiers are supposed to have put more than 30,000 to the sword. Ali Bey reckoned that it did not shelter more than from 16,000 to 18,000; Burckhardt, a later authority, gives as the result of his inquiries, for the population of the city and suburbs between 25,000 and 30,000 stationary inhabitants, besides from 2000 to 4000 Abyssinians and black slaves. The dwellings, however, are capable of containing three times that number, some quarters of the suburbs being entirely deserted and in ruins; so that, unless the zeal of the hajjis revive, the capital of Islam must gradually sink into decay.

## CHAPTER VI.

*The Mohammedan Pilgrimage.*

The Pilgrim-caravans—Their different Routes—Description and Number of Pilgrims—The Mahmal—The Ihram—Duties of the Pilgrims on arriving at Mecca—Walk to Safra and Omra—Journey to Arafat—Sermon of the Cadi—Curious Appearance of the Scene—Stoning of the Devil—The Feast of Sacrifice—Return of the Procession to Mecca—Visit to the Interior of the Kaaba—Departure of the Caravans—Altered Appearance of the City—Holy Places round Mecca—Pilgrimage to Medina—Description of the City—Its Inhabitants—Their Character and Occupation—The Mosque of the Prophet—The famous Tomb of Mohammed—Ceremonies required of the Hujjis—Servants and Revenues of the Mosque—Sacred Places near Medina—Return of the Pilgrims—Bedr—Suez—Convent of St Catherine—Regulations and Hospitality of the Monks—Places of superstitious Resort about Mount Sinai—The Cave of Elijah—The Rock of Meribah—Gebel Mokkateb or the Written Mountains—The Convent near Tor—Gebel Narkous or Mountain of the Bell.

THE law of the Koran, as is well known, enjoins on every Mussulman, who has the means, to perform a pilgrimage to Mecca once at least in his life. Dulhajja, as the name imports, is the month peculiarly set apart for the performance of this solemnity. To those whom indispensable occupations confine at home the law permits a substitution of prayers; but even this is often evaded, and the duty executed by commission at the expense of a few dollars. Formerly, when devotional zeal was more ardent, the difficulties of the journey were

held to increase the merit of the act ; but at present many, instead of encountering the perils of deserts and robbers by land, adopt the more cheap and easy mode of travelling by sea. The regular haj-caravans are six or seven in number, though they do not always make their appearance together, nor even perform the visit annually. That from Syria, which used to be accompanied by the caliphs in person, sets out from Constantinople, and collects the pilgrims from Northern Asia until it reaches Damascus. During the whole route, for the sake of safety and convenience, it is attended from town to town by the armed force of the district. From Damascus to Medina it moves with great pomp across the desert,—a journey of thirty days ; and here a change of camels, for which the Bedouins contract, is necessary ; the Anatolian breed being unable to bear the fatigues of such an expedition. The Pasha of Damascus or one of his principal officers always attends it, and gives the signal for encamping and departing by firing a musket. The different classes of hajjis know their exact stations, and always place their tents according to their town or province. At every stage is a castle or storehouse for provisions, with a small garrison, and a large tank at which the camels water. These stations are seldom farther distant from each other than a march of eleven or twelve hours. The usual time of travelling is from three o'clock in the afternoon to an hour or two after sunrise next day, torches being lighted during the night. The Egyptian caravan, which starts from Cairo, is under the same regulations as the Syrian. Its route is more dangerous and fatiguing, lying by Suez and Akaba,



along the shore of the Red Sea, through the territories of wild and warlike tribes, who frequently attack it by open force. The Persian haj departs from Bagdad, and traverses Nejed by Deraiah. As the Persians are reckoned notorious heretics, and are generally persons of property, they are subjected to severe impositions, and have occasionally been prohibited from entering the Holy City. The Moggrebin caravan brings the pilgrims from Barbary and Morocco. It is usually accompanied by a relative of the king, and proceeds from his capital by slow marches towards Tunis and Tripoli, thence along the Mediterranean shores to Alexandria or Cairo, collecting the hajjis in every district through which it passes. Yemen sent two caravans; one from Saade, which took its course along the mountains to Taïf, and the other travelled by the coast, taking up such of the Persians and Indians as had arrived in the harbours of the country. A caravan of Indian pilgrims is said to have started from Muscat and travelled through Nejed; but this route, it appears, has been long discontinued. Of late the greater portion of the hajjis do not travel with the regular caravans, but arrive by sea at Jidda. Those from the north, including Turks, Tartars, Syrians, Moors, and Africans, embark at Suez or Cosseir; but the wretched and crowded state of the vessels renders the passage disagreeable and often dangerous. Crowds of devotees arrive in the opposite direction from Yemen, the borders of Persia, Java, Sumatra, and the distant realms watered by the Indus: these comprise Hindoos and Malays,—people from Cashmere and Guzerat,—Arabs from Bussora, Oman, and Hadramaut,—natives of Nubia and Upper

Egypt,—and those from the coasts of Melinda and Mombaza. All Moslems dwelling near the ocean are certain of finding, towards the period of the haj, ships departing from some neighbouring harbour to the Red Sea ; but the greater number come with the regular Indian fleet. From all these regions swarms of beggars flock to Mecca,—they get a free passage from charitable individuals among their own countrymen, or their expense is defrayed by those who employ them as proxies in performing the indispensable duties of the pilgrimage. But on landing they are thrown entirely on the benevolence of the hajjis, and the alms they collect must serve to carry them back to their homes. All the poorer class of Indians turn mendicants ; and their wretched appearance would make them worthy objects of commiseration, were it not known that they assume a tone and character of outward misery, because it ensures them a subsistence without labour.

None of these paupers bear a more respectable character for industry than the Negroes or *Tekrouris*, as they are called, who employ themselves as porters for carrying goods, cleaning the court-yards, or fetching firewood from the neighbouring mountains. Some of them manufacture small baskets and mats of date-leaves, or little hearths of clay painted yellow and red, which they sell to the hajjis, who boil their coffeepots upon them. Others serve as water-carriers, or prepare bouza, or occupy themselves in any species of manual labour.

Among the pilgrims are to be found dervises of every sect and order in the Turkish empire : many of them are madmen, or at least assuming the appearance of insanity ; and as the Mohammedans re-

gard them as saints or inspired beings, sent as a blessing to them from Heaven, they are much respected by the devotees, who scruple not to fill their pockets with money. The behaviour of some of them is indecent, and so violent, that many willingly give them a trifle to escape from their importunities. Most of the pilgrims that arrive in detachments and before the caravans, are professed merchants, who occupy the interval very pleasantly in disposing of their wares, praying, smoking, reading the Koran, enjoying the gratifications of sense, and anticipating the happiness of futurity. Except mendicants, almost every hajji combines with his religious duties some little mercantile adventure, with a view to lessen his expenses. The Moggrebins, for example, bring their red bonnets and woollen cloaks; the Western Turks, shoes and slippers, hardware, embroidered stuffs, sweetmeats, amber, trinkets of European manufacture, knit silk purses, and other small wares; the Anatolians bring carpets, silks, and Angora shawls; the Persians, Cashmere shawls and large silk handkerchiefs; the Afghans, tooth-brushes made of the spongy boughs of a tree in Bokkara, yellow beads, and plain coarse shawls of their own manufacture; the Indians import the numerous productions of their rich and extensive regions; and the people of Yemen bring snakes for the Persian pipes, sandals, and various articles in leather.

In general the regular caravans have fixed periods for their arrival. Those from Syria and Egypt unite their routes at Bedr, whence they proceed to Mecca at a short distance from each other. The approach of the foremost is announced by a horseman, who comes galloping through the town to the

governor's house ; a prize being always awarded to him who brings the first tidings of its safety.

The pomp and magnificence of this moving solemnity are still considerable, though much diminished since the time of the caliphs, both in point of splendour and attendance. When Solyman performed the pilgrimage (A. D. 716), 900 camels were employed in transporting his wardrobe alone. Mahadi, besides the vast sums he expended in presents, built fine houses at every station between Bagdad and Mecca, and caused them to be splendidly furnished. He was the first caliph that carried snow-water with him to cool his sherbet on the road ;—a luxury in which he was imitated by many of his successors. Haroun al Raschid, who performed the haj nine times, spent in one of his visits nearly a million and a half of gold dinars (£693,750) in presents ; in another, he and his wife Zobeide accomplished the journey from Bagdad (nearly 1000 miles) on foot ; but the merit must have been lessened, as the whole road was covered daily with fine carpets on which they walked. The retinue of the mother of Mostasem, who visited Mecca in 1231, was composed of 120,000 camels. On a similar occasion the equipage of the Sultan of Egypt consisted of 500 of these animals for the transport solely of sweetmeats and confectionary ; 280 for pomegranates, almonds, and other fruits ; besides having his travelling-larder provided with 1000 geese and 3000 fowls.

In 1814, the Syrian caravan, which was reckoned small, amounted only to 4000 or 5000 persons, and was attended by 15,000 camels. The Barbary caravan sometimes contained 40,000 men ; but it has not of late exceeded 6000 or 8000. That from Egypt

used to be extremely numerous: Barthema states that when he was at Mecca it had 64,000 camels. In 1814, it consisted principally of Mohammed Ali's troops, with very few pilgrims; but in 1816, a single grandee of Cairo joined the haj with 110 camels for the transport of his baggage and retinue; and his travelling-expenses alone, Burckhardt supposes, could not have been less than £10,000. The wife of Ali had a truly royal equipage, comprehending 500 beasts of burden. The tents of the public-women and dancing-girls were among the most splendid in this caravan. Females are not excluded from performing the pilgrimage; but the law prescribes that they shall be married women, and accompanied by their husbands or some very near relation. Rich old widows, and such as lose their husbands by the way, are provided with *delils* or guides, who facilitate their progress through the sacred territory, and act also in a matrimonial capacity; but these unions are only temporary, and at the conclusion of their devotions the man must divorce his companion, otherwise the marriage would be considered binding.

There is one distinction formerly common to all large caravans, but now used only by the Syrian and Egyptian; each of these has its holy camel, carrying on its back the *mahmal* with presents for the Kaaba, and which also serves the purpose of a sign or banner to their respective companies. This appendage is minutely described by Maundrell and D'Ohsson as a high hollow wooden frame, in the shape of a cone, having a pyramidal top covered with fine silk brocade, and adorned with ostrich-feathers. A small book of prayers and charms is placed in the middle, wrapped up in a

piece of silk. It was not used by the caliphs, having been first introduced (A. D. 1274) by the Sultan of Egypt. Since that time the different Mussulman sovereigns have considered the mahmal as a privilege, and a badge of their own royalty.\* On the return of the caravans, the sacred camel, which is never after employed in labour, and the book of prayers, are objects of great veneration among the lower class, or such as have not been at Mecca: men and women flock in crowds to kiss it, and obtain a blessing by rubbing their foreheads upon it.

The awful sanctity of Mecca and its territory renders it necessary that every traveller, whether on a religious visit or not, shall undergo a certain transformation in dress the moment he enters the *Belled el Haram*, or Holy Land of Islam† From whatever quarter the hajjis arrive, they are instantly re-

---

\* "The mahmal (of Damascus) is a large pavilion of black silk pitched upon the back of a very great camel, and spreading its curtains all round about the beast down to the ground. This camel wants not also his ornaments of large ropes of beads, fish-shells, fox-tails, and other such fantastic finery, hanged upon his head, neck, and legs. All this is designed for the Alcoran, which thus rides in state both to and from Mecca, and is accompanied with a rich new carpet sent every year by the grand seignor for the covering of Mahomet's tomb,—having the old one brought back in return for it, which is esteemed of an inestimable value after having been so long next neighbour to the Prophet's rotten bones."—*Maundrell's Travels*.

† The Belled el Haram is properly the sacred district round Mecca, which has the privileges of a sanctuary or asylum,—the law having forbidden the shedding of blood, killing of game, or cutting of trees within it. This sanctity, however, is but little regarded;—criminals are slain without scruple,—persons have been assassinated even under the walls of the Kaaba,—and battles, both with infantry and cavalry, fought within the enclosure of the Temple. The limits of this sacred territory are differently represented. At present it is generally supposed to be bounded within those positions where the ihram is assumed in approaching Mecca, viz. *Hadda*, on the west; *Asfan*, on the north; *Wady Mohrem*, on the east; and *Zat Ork*, on the south. Ali Bey mistakes when he considered this district a particular province. Medina has the same privileges, but they are held in as little veneration. •

quired to strip themselves naked, throw away their garments, and put on the ihram or pilgrim's cloak, which consists of two pieces of linen, woollen, or cotton cloth; one of which is wrapped round the loins, and the other thrown over the neck and shoulders, so as to leave part of the right arm uncovered. The law ordains that there shall be no seam in it, no silk, nor ornament of any kind. White Indian cambric, that being considered the preferable colour, is generally employed for the purpose; but rich hajjis use Cashmere shawls without flowered borders. In assuming it certain ceremonies are observed; such as making a general ablution, saying a prayer while naked, taking a few steps in the direction of Mecca, and uttering pious invocations, called *telbi*.

The ihram, whether taken in summer or in winter, is equally inconvenient and prejudicial to health. The head remains totally unprotected, and exposed to the sun's rays: the instep of the foot must likewise be uncovered; so that those who wear shoes instead of sandals cut a piece out of the upper leather. The northern Moslem, accustomed to thick woollen clothes, find it a severe experiment on their religious zeal to remain sometimes for months, night and day, with no other vestment than this thin garb. The ihram of the women consists of a cloak, so close that not even their eyes can be seen. Old age and disease are excuses for keeping the head covered; but this indulgence must be purchased by giving alms to the poor. Umbrellas are not forbidden, and are used by most of the visitors from colder climates; but the natives of the south either brave the sun's rays, or screen themselves by means of a rag tied to a stick. Though many have died in consequence of this exposure, nobody utters a com-

plaint. There are no restrictions now as to particular diet ; but the *mohrem*, as the vested pilgrim is called, is enjoined to behave decently, not to curse or quarrel, nor to kill any animal, not even the vermin that may infest his own person ; although, according to Pitts, “ if they cannot well be endured any longer, it is lawful to remove them from one part of the body to another.” The laxity of modern times occasionally dispenses altogether with the ceremony of the *maharmo*, especially among the servants and camel-drivers.

All the caravans as they arrive pass through the town in procession, accompanied by their guards of soldiers, with martial music. The equipage of the emirs is very splendid. They are mounted in palanquins or *taktrouans*,—a kind of closed litter or cage, carried by two camels, one before and the other behind. The heads of the camels are decorated with feathers, tassels, and bells ; the streets are lined with people, who as they move along greet them with loud acclamations.

On entering Mecca, the first duty of the pilgrim is to visit the mosque immediately ; and this injunction applies to all strangers whatever. The prescribed ceremonies are, first to repeat certain prayers in different parts of the Temple ; namely, at the entrance under the colonnade, two rikats and four prostrations are addressed to the Deity in thankfulness for having reached the holy spot, and in salutation of the mosque itself : then, advancing into the court, certain ejaculations are uttered while passing under the insulated arch in front of the Kaaba, and two rikats are pronounced opposite the black stone ; at the conclusion of which it is touched



with the right hand, or kissed, if the pressure of the crowd will admit. The devotee then performs the towaf, keeping the Kaaba on his left hand; this ceremony, which was done by the Pagan Arabs in a state of nudity, is repeated seven times, the three first in a quick pace, in imitation of the Prophet; each circuit is accompanied with prescribed prayers and a salutation of the black stone. This done, after a few more rikats, he proceeds to the Zemzem Well, in honour of which he addresses some pious ejaculations, and then drinks as much water as he wishes or can get. Some have it poured over them in bucketfuls, "and then," says Barthema, "the fools think their sins are washed into the well." Others swallow it so unreasonably, that they lie for hours extended on the pavement, while their flesh breaks out into pimples; and this, as Pitts wittily remarks, they call "the purging of their spiritual corruptions." These are the different ceremonies observed within the Temple, which the pilgrims repeat after their guides.

The next ceremony that the hajji has to perform is the *sai*, or holy walk between Safa and Meroua; which is done along a level street about six hundred paces in length, and terminated at each end by a stone platform covered with open arches, and ascended by a flight of steps. This perambulation, which for a short space must be run, is to be repeated seven times; prayers are incessantly recited in a loud voice; and on the two platforms the face must be turned to the mosque. A third ceremony is that of shaving the head; and the barbers, whose shops abound in the vicinity of Meroua, during the operation utter a particular prayer, which the hajjis repeat after them. This religious tonsure is follow-

ed by the walk to Omra, a place about an hour and a half's distance from Mecca, where the pilgrim prays two rikats in a small chapel; and must chant the *telbi* or pious ejaculations all the way. After this the towaf and sai must be again performed, which closes the preliminary ceremonies. Some have only part of the head shaven before the visit to Omra, and the rest completed immediately afterwards. The walk round the Kaaba may be repeated as often as the pilgrim thinks fit; and the more frequently the more meritorious. Most foreigners do it twice daily,—in the evening and before daybreak.

When all the necessary rites have been gone through at Mecca, the whole concourse of visitors repair in a body to Mount Arafat, which is the grand day of the pilgrimage. This mountain is a principal object of Moslem veneration; and some even assert, that a pilgrimage to it would be equally meritorious though the Kaaba ceased to exist. Tradition says it was here that the common father of mankind met Eve after the long separation of 200 years consequent on the Fall; that he built the chapel on its summit before he retired with his wife to the island of Ceylon; and was there instructed by the angel Gabriel how to adore his Creator; the spot still bears the name of *Modaa Seidna Adam*, or Place of Prayer of our Lord Adam. It was here, too, that Mohammed is said to have addressed his followers,—a practice in which he was imitated by the caliphs, who preached on the same spot when they performed the haj. This hill, or rather granite rock, which is about 200 feet high, stands about six hours' journey to the eastward of Mecca, at

the foot of a higher mountain, in a sandy plain about three quarters of a league in diameter. On the eastern side broad stone steps lead to the top, and these are covered with innumerable handkerchiefs for receiving the pious gifts which are claimed by the families of the Koreish, in whose territory this sacred eminence stands.

On the Day of Arafat, or Feast of Sacrifice as it is called, and which can only be performed at a certain time, the pilgrims take their journey, some on camels, others on mules or asses ; but the greater number walk barefooted, which is esteemed the most pious mode of travelling. The crowd is so vast, that several hours elapse before they can clear the narrow outskirts of Mecca. Beyond the town a few miles the road widens, in passing through the valley of Muna, where the law enjoins certain prayers and ceremonies (paring the nails, and cutting the hair) to be observed. This march is necessarily attended with great confusion. "Of the half-naked hajjis," says Burckhardt, "all dressed in the white ihram, some sat reading the Koran upon their camels ; some ejaculated loud prayers ; whilst others cursed their drivers, and quarrelled with those near them who choked up the passage."

Leaving Muna the plain of Arafat opens through a rocky defile in the mountains ; on reaching which the caravans and numerous detachments of pilgrims disperse in quest of their respective places of encampment. It was about three hours after sunset when Burckhardt arrived ; but stragglers continued to pour in till midnight. Numberless fires were now seen lighted up over an extent of ground three or four miles in length ; while high and brilliant

clusters of lamps marked the different places where Mohammed Ali, Solyman Pasha, and other emirs of the haj, had pitched their tents. Pilgrims were seen wandering in every direction from camp to camp, in search of their companions whom they had lost on the road ; and it was several hours before the noise and clamour had subsided. Few persons slept ; the devotees sat up praying and uttering their loud chants ; the merry Meccawees formed themselves into parties, singing the jovial songs called *jok*, accompanied by clapping of hands ; while the coffee-tents were crowded the whole night with customers.

The dawn was announced by a discharge of musketry, which summoned the Faithful to make ready for their morning prayers. After sunrise Burckhardt ascended the summit of the mount, which presented a very extensive and singular prospect. Long streets of tents fitted up as bazaars furnished the busy crowds with all kinds of provisions. The Syrian and Egyptian cavalry were exercised by their chiefs ; while thousands of camels were feeding on the dry shrubs all around the camps. About 3000 tents were dispersed over the plain ; though the greater number of the assembled multitudes had no such accommodation. The caravans were placed without order ; and many of them in the form of large circles or *dowars*, in the inside of which their camels reposed.

Of these encampments the most rich and magnificent were those of Yahia, the sheriff of Mecca, the Pasha of Damascus, the Viceroy of Egypt, and more particularly of his wife, who had lately arrived from Cairo. Her equipage included a dozen tents, of different sizes, inhabited by her women : the whole

was surrounded with a wall of linen cloth 800 paces in circuit, the sole entrance to which was guarded by eunuchs in splendid dresses. Around this enclosure were pitched the tents of the men who formed her numerous suite. The beautiful embroidery on the exterior of this linen palace, with the various colours displayed in every part of it, must have reminded the spectator of the gorgeous descriptions in the *Tales of the Thousand and One Nights*. Some of the Mecca merchants, especially the family of Jelani, had very elegant tents ; this being almost the only occasion when the Arabian grandees ever venture to display their wealth in the presence of a pasha.

Burckhardt estimated the whole persons assembled on the plain at about 70,000 ; and the number of camels from 20,000 to 25,000. This seems a favourite number with the Mohammedans ; but it is deserving of remark, that he is the third traveller who has made the same calculation. Pitts and Ali Bey mention this as being the smallest number that must necessarily attend at any pilgrimage on Mount Arafat ; and, in every case where there are fewer, angels are sent down from heaven to make up the deficiency. Burckhardt's 70,000 appears a tolerable assemblage, even without the addition of celestial recruits ; yet he says that two only of the five or six regular caravans had made their appearance that year. When the Spanish Mussulman performed this ceremony, he reckoned the number of hajjis at 80,000 men, 2000 women, and 1000 children ; who must have presented a curious spectacle, with their 60,000 or 70,000 camels, asses, and horses, marching ~~through the narrow valley in a cloud of dust, carry-~~

ing a forest of lances, guns, swivels, and other arms, and forcing their passage along as they best could.

The law ordains that the true position of the haj should be on Arafat ; but it wisely provides against any impossibility arising from its scanty dimensions, by declaring that the mountain includes the plain in the immediate neighbourhood. A similar provision is made with regard to the great mosque, which can accommodate at prayers about 35,000 persons. There is, however, an opinion prevalent at Mecca, founded on a holy tradition, that it is capable of containing any number of the Faithful—even the whole Mohammedan community, who might all enter at once, and find ample room. The guardian angels are gifted with the power of invisibly extending the limits of the building, or diminishing the size of the worshipper ; but in modern times there is no occasion for this miracle, as the Temple is never half filled, and seldom visited, even during the haj, by more than 10,000 individuals at once.

About three o'clock the chief ceremony of the day takes place, that of the *khoteb* or sermon, which is usually preached by the Cadi of Mecca. The whole multitude now unpitch their tents, press forward towards the mountain, and cover its sides from top to bottom. The orator takes his stand on the stone platform near the top, whence he addresses the crowd. The discourse lasts till sunset, and no pilgrim, although he may have visited all the holy places of Mecca, is entitled to the name of hajji unless he has been present on this occasion.

The cadi, whom Burckhardt describes as mounted on a richly-caparisoned camel, read his sermon from a book in Arabic, which he held in his hand.

at intervals of every four or five minutes he paused, and stretched forth his arms to implore blessings on his hearers ; while the congregation around and before him waved the skirts of their ihrams over their heads, and rent the air with shouts of " Le-beik, Allahuma, lebeik !" (Here we are at thy commands, O God !) During the wavings of the white garments by the dense crowd, the side of the mountain had the appearance of a cataract of water, and the green umbrellas of the myriads of hajjis sitting on their camels below bore some resemblance to a verdant lawn. The sermon lasted nearly three hours, during which the cadî was constantly wiping his eyes ; for the law enjoins the preacher to be moved with feelings of compunction, and to consider tears as evidence that he is divinely illuminated, and that his prayers are acceptable.

The effect of this scene upon the audience was extremely various. Some of the pilgrims were crying loudly, weeping and beating their breasts for their sins ; others stood in silent reflection, with tears of adoration in their eyes. But these penitents were mostly foreigners. The natives of Hejaz, and the Turkish soldiers, spent the time in conversing and joking, and imitating the waving of the ihrams by violent gestures as if in mockery. Parties of Arabs were quietly smoking their nargiles ; while the frequenters of the cafés, some of which were kept by public-women, by their loud laughter and riotous conduct gave great annoyance to the devotees in their neighbourhood.

To every stranger, whether Mohammedan, Jew, or Christian, such an assemblage must furnish a curious and impressive spectacle. " It was a sight," says

Pitts, "enough to pierce one's heart, to behold so many in their garments of humility and mortification, with their naked heads, and cheeks watered with tears; and to hear their grievous sighs and sobs, begging earnestly for the remission of their sins." Many of the poor pilgrims are in an ecstasy, and believe themselves in actual possession of paradise. "It is here," observes Ali Bey, "that the grand spectacle of the Mussulman pilgrimage must be seen. An innumerable crowd of men from all nations, and of all colours, coming from the extremities of the earth, through a thousand dangers, and encountering fatigues of every description, to adore together the same Deity! The native of Circassia presents his hand in a friendly manner to the Ethiopian, or the negro of Guinea; the Indian and the Persian embrace the inhabitants of Barbary and Morocco; all looking upon each other as brothers, or individuals of the same family united by the bonds of religion, and the greater part speaking or understanding more or less the same language. What a curb to sin," adds this zealous Mussulman, "what an encouragement to virtue! but what a misfortune, that with all these advantages we should not be better than the Calvinists!"

By the time the *cadi* had finished his discourse the greater part of the audience seemed to be wearied. The sun was descending behind the western mountains as he shut the book and pronounced the last greeting of "*Lebeik*." Instantly the crowds prepared to quit Arafat on their return; those behind hurrying and pressing on those before; so that with many it is a trial of strength and speed. Formerly bloody affrays took place almost every year; each



party endeavouring to outrun and carry its mahmal in advance of the other. Two hundred lives have on some occasions been lost in supporting what was thought the honour of their respective caravans.

The cause of this precipitation is, that the ritual orders the *mogreb*, or prayer of the setting sun, to be said at Mezdelifa, a mosque or oratory two hours distant. The departure and march is a scene of splendid confusion; many pilgrims had lost their companions, others their camels, who were heard calling loudly for their drivers, or searching for them over the plain. As it was dark, innumerable torches were lighted, emitting sparks of fire; there were continual volleys of artillery; sky-rockets were let off; and bands of martial music played till they arrived at the mosque. Here another sermon is preached by torchlight, commencing with the first dawn, and continuing till the sun rises above the horizon, when the pilgrims move onward to Wady Muna, a distance of three miles.

This narrow valley, enclosed on both sides by steep barren cliffs of granite, contains a single street of houses built of stone, some of which are inhabited, but the greater part in ruins. It abounds with sacred relics. Here is the mosque of *Meshed el Kheif*, in which the Arabs assert that Adam was buried; here Abraham intended to sacrifice his son, and a granite block is shown, alleged to have been cleft in two by the stroke of his knife; here Mohammed was favoured with many of his revelations; and here the devil had the malice to whisper Ishmael in the ear that he was about to be slain;—other traditions say, he attempted to obstruct his father in his passage at three different places, which are marked by as many

stone pillars. The first duty of the pilgrim is to provide himself with twenty-one small pebbles of the size of a horse-bean: these he must throw at the proper times and places, seven at each pillar, exclaiming, "Bismillah! God is great! this we do to secure ourselves from the devil and his troops!" This ceremony, as may easily be imagined, is attended occasionally by accidents. Ali Bey tells us, he came off with two wounds in his left leg. It appears also to be the subject of jocularities; for a facetious hajji observed to Pitts, "You may save your labour at present if you please, for I have hit out the devil's eyes already."

After the "stoning," which is repeated three days, and without which the pilgrimage is imperfect, comes the grand sacrifice of animals,—a rite that all Mussulmans are bound at this time (the 10th day of the month) to perform. In the space of a quarter of an hour thousands of sheep and goats are slaughtered in the valley; some of which are brought by the hajjis, others purchased from the Bedouins, who demand high prices for them. The law requires that the throats of the animals be cut in the name of the most merciful God, with their faces towards the Kaaba. The number of victims has sometimes been very great. The Caliph Moktader sacrificed 50,000 sheep, besides 40,000 camels and cows. Barthema speaks of 30,000 oxen being slain, and their carcasses given to the poor, who seemed "more anxious to have their bellies filled than their sins remitted." We are apt to wonder how so many myriads of animals can subsist in so desolate a region, or how they can be contained in so contracted a space as Wady Muna; but the Moslems explain it, by pretending that the valley can expand its di-

mensions ; and that on the Day of Sacrifice neither vultures nor flies molest the votaries by carrying off the lambs or tainting the raw flesh, vast quantities of which remain unconsumed.

On the completion of the sacrifice, the pilgrims throw off the ihram, and resume their ordinary attire ; many of them putting on their best dresses to celebrate the day of the feast or *beiram*. The long street of Muna is converted into a fair ; sheds, booths, and tents, being fitted up as shops for provisions and merchandise of all kinds. The Syrian bargains for the goods of India ; the stranger from Borneo and Timbuctoo exhibits his wares to the natives of Georgia and Samarcand ; while the poor hajjis cry their small stock, which they carry on their heads. The mixture of nations and tongues, costumes and commodities, is more striking here than at Mecca. At night the valley blazes with illuminations, fireworks, discharges of artillery, and bonfires on the hills. The second day of the feast, ends the pilgrimage to Arafat ; when the devotees return to Mecca, testifying their delight by songs, loud talking, and laughter. Many of the indigent pilgrims remain behind to feast on the offals and putrefying carcasses of the victims that strew the valley. The starved Indians cut the meat into slices for their travelling-provisions, which they dry in the sun, or in the mosque, where they are spread on the pavement or suspended on cords between the columns.

On arriving at Mecca a repetition of the previous ceremonies takes place. The pilgrims must visit the Kaaba, which, in the mean time, has been covered with the new black clothing. The visit to the interior of this building is performed by immense

crowds, though it forms no part of the religious duty of the hajjis. On opening the door, which takes place an hour after sunrise, a rush is made up the steps, and sometimes over the heads of the people, in spite of the eunuchs, who endeavour to keep order with their sticks, which fall particularly heavy on such as omit to drop a fee into their hands; for all the officers, from the sheriff who holds the silver key to be kissed at the entrance, to the lowest menial, expect to be paid. The hall is immediately filled, when every visiter must pray eight rikats, and perform sixteen prostrations. Nothing but sighing and moaning is heard,—the effect of pressure, perhaps of sincere repentance; but it is easy to imagine how these devotions are performed, for while one is bowing down another walks over his back; some are unmercifully crushed, and many are carried out with difficulty quite senseless from heat and suffocation.

On the first and second days the men and women enter alternately; on the third, the sheriff, the sheiks, and illustrious hajjis, perform the holy ceremony of sweeping and washing the floor. All the water-carriers in Mecca advance with pitchers and besoms, which are passed from hand to hand till they reach the guards at the entrance. The negroes then throw the water on the pavement, while the devotees sweep and scrub with both hands, until the floor appears polished like glass. The water flows out by a hole under the door; and foul as it is, it is eagerly drunk by the Faithful; while those who are at a distance have quantities of it thrown over them by the eunuchs. It must require no common pitch of fanaticism to reconcile the stomach of the worshipper to this practice; but the Moslem excuse it

by alleging, that although the liquid is very dirty it has the benediction of God, and is besides much perfumed with the essence of roses. The brooms of palm-leaves, as well as the shreds of the cloth that surrounds the door and bottom of the hall, are divided among the pilgrims, and treasured up as relics. Pieces both of the exterior and interior coverings are constantly on sale at a shop before the Bab es Salaam: the latter are most esteemed, and waistcoats are made of it, which the Believers reckon the safest armour they can wear.

During the Ramadan, and especially on the last day, the mosque is particularly brilliant. At the celebration of the evening orisons, the whole square and colonnades are illuminated by thousands of lamps; and in addition, to these, most of the hajjis have each his own lantern standing before him. The agreeable coolness of the place induces them to walk about or sit conversing till after midnight. As the legal period of abstinence now terminates, every one brings in his handkerchief a few dates or grapes, with bread and cheese, waiting in suspense until the imam from the top of the Zemzem proclaims "Allahu Akbar," when they hasten to break their fast (the lesser *beiram*) and drink a jar of the holy water. The whole scene presents a curious mixture of the gay and the grave. The mind is struck with some degree of awe to witness so many thousands performing the towaf, or prostrating themselves on their carpets; while the mingled voices of the metowafs, intent on making themselves heard by those to whom they recite their prayers,—the loud conversation of idle spectators,—and the running and laughing of boys, some of whom are diverting themselves with

swinging machines, or the feats of jugglers in the streets, make the Temple more like a place of public amusement than a sanctuary of religion.

Before the caravans take their final departure, the pilgrims, from the highest to the lowest, are occupied with commercial transactions, either buying provisions for their journey or engrossed in the pursuits of gain. The termination of the haj changes the entire aspect both of the town and the Temple. Of the brilliant shops lately filled with the productions and manufactures of every climate in the world, Burckhardt remarks, that not more than a fourth part remained. The streets were deserted, covered with rubbish and filth, which nobody seemed disposed to remove, and swarming with beggars, who raised their plaintive voices towards the windows of the houses, they supposed to be still inhabited.\* The suburbs were crowded with the carcasses of dead camels, of which above 10,000 are supposed to perish annually; the smell rendering the air offensive, and spreading pestilence among the inhabitants.

The mosque itself is not free from these pollutions.

---

\* The streets and mosques of Mecca resound with the cries of beggars:—"O Brethren! O Faithful! hear me! I ask twenty dollars from God to pay for my passage home; twenty dollars only! God is all-bountiful, and may send me a hundred dollars; but it is twenty dollars only that I ask! Remember that charity is the sure road to paradise!" Burckhardt mentions a Yemen beggar at Jidda who mounted the minaret daily after noon prayer, and exclaimed, loud enough to be heard through the whole bazaar, "I ask from God fifty dollars, a suit of clothes, and a copy of the Koran. O Faithful, hear me! I ask of you fifty dollars," &c. This he repeated for several weeks, when a Turkish pilgrim offered him thirty dollars to discontinue his cries:—"No," said the beggar, "I will not take them, because I am convinced God will send me the whole." At length the same hajji gave him his full demand without being thanked for it—"Pull my beard," the needy suppliant will say to the scrupulous pilgrim, "if God does not send you ten times more than what I ask!"

Poor hajjis, worn out with disease and hunger, are seen dragging their emaciated bodies along the colonnades ; and when no longer able to stretch forth their hand to ask the passengers for charity, they place a bowl to receive alms near the mat on which they lie. All the sick, when they feel their last moments approach, are carried to the Temple, that they may either be cured by a sight of the Kaaba, or have the satisfaction of expiring within the sacred enclosure. The friendless stranger thinks paradise secure if he can obtain a sprinkling of the Zemzem water, and breathe his latest sigh " in the arms of the Prophet and the guardian angels." For a month subsequent to the conclusion of the haj, dead bodies are carried forth almost every morning, and buried by persons in the service of the mosque.

" Before bidding adieu to the capital of Islam, there are several holy spots in the town and suburbs which the pilgrims visit. Among these are the *mouleds*, or birthplaces of Mohammed, Faṭima, Ali, Abu Beker, and Abu Taleb who is the great patron of the city, and whose name is held most sacred. The tombs of Kadijah and Amina the Prophet's mother are also objects of veneration. The guardianship of these places is shared by several families, principally sheriffs, who attend by turns with a train of servants, and generally expect a contribution from the purse of the visitors. Most of the hills in the vicinity are held as consecrated ground, from being the scene of the miracles or revelations of the Apostle. On the top of Gebel Kabeis, the hajjis are shown the place where the moon was split ; at Gebel Tor, the cavern where the fugitive Prophet and his companions took shelter in their flight to Medina ; and at Hira, now called Gebel Nour or the Mountain of Light, the small grotto is

pointed out in the red granite rock, where several passages of the Koran were revealed by the angel Gabriel. But the tales applied to these places are not supported by any authentic traditions; and a journey to them is enjoined, less out of any feeling of reverence than from a desire to extort money.


A more attractive object of devotion is the tomb of Mohammed at Medina; and such of the hajjis as do not immediately disperse to their homes, usually join the Syrian caravan, or form themselves into small detachments, who are supplied with camels by the Bedouins. Their mode of travelling is not the most convenient; some being mounted on the back of the loaded animal, and others sitting, one on each side, in panniers or machines (*shekdafs*), which must be balanced with great care. According to the usual practice in Hejaz, the camels walk in a single row, those behind being tied to the tails of those that precede them; so that a mistake committed by the foremost leads the whole astray. A journey of ten or eleven days (about 270 miles), through sandy plains, irregular ridges of mountains, and cultivated valleys, brings the pilgrims to the city of the Prophet. On the whole of this route there is not a public khan; nor is any provision made for the accommodation of travellers, except the watering-places, which are kept in tolerable repair. Although reckoned sufficiently safe for large bodies, yet daring robberies are occasionally committed by the Arabs.

The sacred city of Medina lies on the edge of the Great Arabian Desert. According to the strict precept of Mohammed, a circle of twelve miles round the place should be considered as holy territory; but this injunction is completely set aside. The town itself is well built: the houses are generally two stories high,



entirely of stone ; and not being white-washed they have for the most part a gloomy aspect. The main streets are paved ; the rest are narrow, often only two or three paces across. The wall, which completely surrounds the city, forms a kind of oval of about 2800 paces in circumference, ending in a point or small rocky elevation, on which stands the castle. This latter is enclosed by a thick stone rampart, between thirty-five and forty feet high, flanked by about thirty towers, and defended by a ditch. It contains sufficient space for 600 or 800 men, has many arched rooms bomb proof, and is supplied with excellent water.

The suburbs extend on the west and south, and cover more ground than the town itself, from which they are separated by an open space occupied with huts, coffee-shops, markets, and gardens. There are very few fine edifices or public buildings, and those here, as well as at Mecca, are the works of the sultans of Egypt and Constantinople. There is an abundant supply of water by means of subterraneous canals and wells which are scattered over the town. The number of inhabitants Butckhardt supposed might be between 16,000 and 20,000 ; the greater part of whom are of foreign origin, and present as motley a race as those of Mecca. No year passes without an influx of new settlers, attracted by the hope of making gain in their religious traffic with the pilgrims. Few descendants of the original Arabs who lived here in the time of Mohammed now remain. Of the Ansars not more than ten families can establish their pedigree ; and these are of the humbler class, living as peasants in the suburbs and gardens. The number of sheriffs descended from Hussein and Hossein was formerly



considerable : the latter are reduced to about a dozen families, who live apart by themselves, and still rank among the grandees of the town. A few individuals claiming the honour of descent from the Abbassides still reside at Medina in a state of poverty, and are known by the appellation of Caliphi, implying the illustrious source whence they are sprung.

The mixed race, of which the greater portion of the inhabitants are composed, all become Arabs as to features and character in course of the second or third generation. In their disposition they are less lively and cheerful than the Meccawees; but, though they appear outwardly more religious, and display more gravity and circumspection in their manners, their moral character is not better, nor are their vices fewer, than those of their neighbours. Their style of living is poor; though their houses are well furnished, and their expense in dress and entertainments is very considerable. As many of them are descended from northern Turks, they retain much of the costume as well as the habits of that nation. Every body, from the highest to the lowest, carries in his hand a bludgeon or long heavy stick. The rich have theirs headed with silver; others fix iron spikes to them, and thus make a formidable weapon, which the Arabs handle with great dexterity in their frequent bloody affrays.

No great or wealthy merchants are settled here; the trade is merely retail, and those who possess capital generally invest it in goods;—there not being any public institution like banks, or commercial companies, or national funds, from which the capitalist might derive interest for his money. As the law rigorously prohibits usury, this source of gain is left wholly in the hands of Jews and Christians,

the outcasts of Europe. The produce of the lands around the town is said to be barely sufficient for four months' consumption, which is estimated at the rate of twenty-five or thirty-five camel-loads per day. The rents of fields and gardens, if the crop be good, is very considerable; the proprietor in ordinary years being able to sell at such a rate as to leave a profit of from twelve to sixteen, and sometimes even forty, per cent. upon his capital, after giving up, as is generally done, half the produce to the actual cultivators. The middling classes, who have small funds, require exorbitant returns,—none of them are content with less than fifty per cent. annually; and in general they contrive, by cheating foreigners, to double their fortune in the course of a single pilgrimage. Most of the merchants have trifling capitals of £400 or £500: there are only two or three families that can be considered wealthy, and these are reported to be worth £10,000 or £12,000 sterling, half of which perhaps is vested in land and the rest in trade.

The principal support of the place is drawn from the mosque and the hajjis. The former, from containing the tomb of Mohammed, is reckoned the precious jewel of Medina; which on this account is esteemed equal, and even preferred by some writers and sects of the Arabs, to Mecca itself. This venerated edifice is situated towards the eastern extremity of the town. It is built much on the same plan with the Temple at Mecca, forming an open square, which is divided by a partition into two separate compartments, and surrounded on all sides by covered arcades; but its dimensions are much smaller, being 165 paces in length and 130 in breadth. The colonnades are less regular, being composed of ten rows of pillars behind each other on the south side;

four rows on the west ; and only three on the north and part of the east side. The columns are of stone, of different sizes, and all plastered white. The small domes on the roof are whitewashed, as are the interior walls, except that on the south side, which is cased with slabs of marble nearly up to the top, and adorned with several rows of inscriptions, one above another, in large gilt letters, which have a very brilliant effect. Spacious windows with glass panes, some of which are finely painted, admit the light through this wall : the floor of the colonnade is here formed of marble, one of the best specimens of mosaic to be seen in the East ; the other parts, as well as the open court, are laid out with a coarse pavement, or merely covered with sand.

The history of this mosque resembles that of the Beitullah. It received many donations and improvements from the caliphs ; and was repeatedly plundered, destroyed, and repaired. In 1250 A. D., a few months after the eruption of a volcano near the town, it caught fire, and was burned to the ground,—an accident which was ascribed to the heterodox Shēahs, who were then the guardians of the tomb. More than 200 years afterwards it was again reduced to ashes by a conflagration occasioned by lightning. All the walls, the roof, and 120 columns, fell ; the books were consumed, and the only part that escaped was the interior of the tomb. Its restoration was undertaken by the Sultan of Egypt, to whom Hejaz owed a number of public works. The whole mosque then assumed its present form, and since that period (A. D. 1487) only a few immaterial improvements have been made by the Turks.

The approach to the temple is choked up on all sides by private buildings, some of which are sepa-

rated from it only by a narrow street, while others are close upon the walls. There are five minarets and four gates; the principal one, by which the hajjis are obliged to enter on their first visit, is extremely handsome,—its sides being inlaid with marble and glazed tiles of various colours, which give it a very dazzling appearance. Immediately before it is a small fountain, where it is usual for the devotees to perform their ablutions. There are a few steps of ascent at all the entrances,—the area of the court being on a higher level than the streets. In the centre of the northern division of the square stands a small building with a vaulted roof, where the lamps of the mosque are kept. Near it is an enclosure of low wooden railings, which contains some palm-trees held sacred by the Moslem, because they are believed to have been planted by Fatima. There are no sacred pigeons as at Mecca; but the quantity of woollen carpets spread on different parts, where the most dirty Arabs and the best-dressed strangers kneel side by side, have rendered this “inviolable Haram” the favourite abode of millions of other animals less harmless than turtle-doves, and a great pest to all visitors, who transfer them from their persons to their private lodgings, which in consequence swarm with vermin.

It is in the south-east corner of this division that the famous sepulchre of Mohammed is placed, so detached from the walls as to leave a space of about twenty-five feet on the one side and fifteen on the other. To defend its hallowed contents from the approach of the impure, or the superstitious adoration of the visiter, it is surrounded by an enclosure called *El Hejra*, in the form of an irregular square of nearly twenty paces, arched overhead and supported by co-

lums. This space is encircled by an iron railing about thirty feet high, of good workmanship, painted green, which fills up the intervals between the pillars, and rises to about two-thirds of their height, leaving the upper part entirely open. The railing is in imitation of fillagree, interwoven with inscriptions of yellow bronze, supposed by the vulgar to be of gold, and of so close a texture that no view can be gained into the interior, except through several very small windows, which are placed on each of the four sides, about five feet above the ground. The two principal windows, before which visitors stand when they pray, are on the south side, where the iron fence is thinly plated over with silver, having the often-repeated inscription of "La Illha" carried across it in silver letters.

Four gates lead into this cage-like enclosure, three of which are kept continually shut,—one only being opened night and morning to admit the eunuchs, whose office it is to clean the floor and light the lamps. What appears of the interior is merely a curtain carried round on all sides, resembling a bed, which is of the same height as the railing, and fills nearly the whole space, leaving only an open walk between of a few paces in breadth. This veil is a rich silk brocade of various colours, interwoven with silver flowers and arabesques; with a band of inscriptions in gold characters running across the middle, like that on the covering of the Kaaba. Within its holy precincts no person is allowed to enter except the chief eunuchs, who take care of it, and whose business it is to put on during the night the fresh curtain, which is sent from Constantinople whenever the old one is decayed, or when a new

sultan ascends the throne. The venerable remnants of this sacred brocade are sent back to the Turkish capital, and serve to cover the tombs of the sovereigns and princes of the empire.

It is within this double frame of silk and rails that the ashes of the Prophet repose, along with the remains of his two earliest friends and immediate successors, Abu Beker and Omar. Authors differ as to the respective position of the three tombs; but they are said to be of plain masonwork, in the form of a chest, and covered with precious stuffs.\* The historian of Medina, Samhoudi, says, that the coffin which contains the dust of Mohammed is cased with silver and overlaid with a marble slab, inscribed, *Bismillai Allahuma Salli alei* (In the name of God bestow thy mercy upon him). Glass lamps are suspended all round the curtain, which are kept burning every night: the floor of this part of the mosque is paved with various-coloured marbles in mosaic. The whole of this enclosure is surmounted by a fine lofty cupola, rising far above the domes on the roof of the colonnades, and visible at a great distance from the town; it is covered with

---

\* The vulgar story long prevalent in Christendom, which suspended the Prophet's coffin in the air at Mecca by the action of two powerful magnets, was a ridiculous invention of the Greeks and Latins, and is unknown in Arabia. The Moslem of the present day smile at the credulity of foreigners who talk of these marvels. The fable may easily be explained without the aid of philosophy, and seems to have originated, as Niebuhr supposes, from the rude drawings sold to strangers, in which the figures of three golden coffins were represented, not as lying horizontally, but placed one above the other, to mark their position within the railing in the annexed order. Chalcondyles (De Reb. Turc., lib. iii. p. 66); Bayle (Dict. Art. Mahomet); Reland (De Relig. Mah. lib. ii. c. 19); Gagnier (Vie, lib. vi. c. 20); and Pocock (Specimen, p. 180), will satisfy the curious student of the iron tomb.

lead, and has on the top a globe of considerable size and a crescent, both glittering with gold.

In the immediate neighbourhood are the tombs of Fatima and other Mohammedan saints. Tradition even alleges, that, when the last trumpet shall sound, the Saviour of the Christians, after having announced the great day of judgment, will die, and be buried by the side of the Arabian Apostle ; and that, when the dead are raised from their graves, they shall both ascend to heaven together. These and other fables have been invented merely to confer an ideal importance on the city and tomb of the Prophet. The same may be said of the exaggerated accounts of its wonders and riches, which have been long propagated among strangers. It was in this sanctuary, indeed, that the treasures of Hejaz were formerly kept, either suspended on silken ropes drawn across the interior of the building, or placed in large chests on the ground. The whole must have formed a collection of considerable value, though far from being to that immense extent which many have pretended. Next to the hejra, the most holy place in the mosque is the *rodha*, where the pulpit is placed, and the two mehrabs. On the sides of the former and of both the mehrabs huge wax-candles are fixed, twelve feet high and as thick as a man's body, which are lighted every evening with the aid of a ladder kept for the purpose.

The ceremonies required of the hajjis are here much easier and shorter than at Mecca. On entering the mosque he must pass his right foot first over the threshold ; while reciting certain supplications he steps forward into the *rodha*, where he is enjoined to repeat two short chapters of the Koran, and a brief



prayer with four prostrations. His next process is to advance slowly towards the railing of the *hejra*, before the window of which, on the south side, he takes his stand. With arms half raised he addresses his invocations to the Prophet, repeating the words of the Moslem creed, besides about twenty of the different surnames or honourable titles of Mohammed. Then follows a prayer soliciting the Apostle's intercession in heaven, in which he includes such of his friends and relations as he pleases ; and if he is delegated in the pilgrimage for another, he is bound here to mention the name of his principal. This done, the visiter must remain a few minutes with his head pressed close against the window in silent adoration ; after which he goes through the same entreaties and humble attitudes at the other windows opposite the tombs of Abu Beker and Omar. A prayer and four prostrations is also addressed before the tomb of the " bright blooming Fatima," as she is always called ; and this, with a salutation to the Deity on returning to the *rodha* before leaving the mosque, completes the ceremony of the *ziara* or visit, the performance of which occupies at most about twenty minutes.

Certain gifts and gratuities are exacted of every pilgrim ; the eunuchs and porters expect their fees as a matter of right ; privileged persons sit at different stations to receive his donations ; and beggars beset him at the gate imploring his charity. The whole visit cost Burckhardt fifteen piastres ; though he states that he might have accomplished it for half the expense. An additional sum is paid by those who enter within the railing of the *hejra* : admission is granted free to pashas, emirs, and per-

sons of rank ; but others must purchase this favour of the eunuchs at the price of twelve or fifteen dollars. Few, however, avail themselves of this indulgence, because there is little to gratify the prying eye of curiosity beyond what falls under their external observation. " All the privileges the hajjis have," says Pitts, " is only to thrust in their heads at the windows between the brass grates, and to petition the dead *juggler*, which they do with a wonderful deal of reverence, affection, and zeal." Though the visit to the mosque and tomb are not obligatory on the Faithful, it is thought to be an act highly acceptable to the Deity, and to expiate many sins, while it entitles the visiter at the same time to the patronage of the Prophet in heaven. The Moslem divines affirm, that a prayer said in sight of the hejra is as efficacious as a thousand said in any other place except Mecca, and that whoever recites forty prayers in this mosque will be delivered from the torments of hell-fire after death. These reputed virtues attract swarms of pilgrims almost every month in the year, and from all parts of the Mohammedan world.

The entire superintendence of watching, cleaning, and lighting, is intrusted to the care of forty or fifty eunuchs, who have an establishment of khatibs, muezzins, and *mexowars* or guides, similar to that of their brethren of the Beitullah. They are persons of far higher importance, and are more richly dressed, though in the same costume. Their usual title is aga ; the chief, or Sheik el Haram, is styled Highness, and considered the principal person in the town. They have large stipends sent yearly from Constantinople, besides a share of the fees and donations of the hajjis. Their number is fixed at 500, and

they have correspondents dispersed over the whole Turkish empire. Besides their share of the income of the mosque, they have their *surra* or annuity, which is transmitted from Constantinople and Cairo ; many of their families receiving as much as £100 or £200 sterling per annum, without performing any duty whatever. It is from this source chiefly that the city with its public and pious foundations is supported, though the greater portion of these annuities is often misapplied, and only serves to pamper a swarm of idle hypocrites.

Notwithstanding some valuable presents, its reputation for wealth, and its splendid exterior, the mosque of the Prophet ranks only as a poor establishment. The gaudy colours displayed on every side, the glazed columns, fine pavements, and gilt inscriptions, dazzle the sight at first ; but after a short pause it becomes evident to the spectator that this is an exhibition of tinsel decoration, and not of real riches. " It will bear no comparison," says Burckhardt, " with the shrine of the most insignificant Catholic saint in Europe, and may serve as a convincing proof that, whatever may be their superstition and fanaticism, the Moslem are not disposed to make the same pecuniary sacrifices to their religious foundations, as the Popish or even the Protestant Christians do for theirs."

There are several other places in the neighbourhood which are also included in these pious visitations, among which are the sepulchres of the son, daughters, wives, aunts, uncles, relations, and immediate successors of the Prophet. So rich indeed is Medina in the remains of great saints, that they have almost lost their individual importance, although the relics of any one of the persons just

mentioned would be sufficient to immortalize any other Moslem town. A visit is made to Gebel Ohud to pray at the tombs of Hamza and the seventy martyrs who fell there in battle. A small cupola marks the spot where Mohammed was struck by the stone which knocked out four of his front teeth. Koba, the village where he first alighted on his flight from Mecca, and the place where he changed the kebla from Jerusalem to the Kaaba, are the only other spots that the pilgrims are enjoined to visit.

As to the government of Medina, it has always been considered since the commencement of Islam as forming a separate principality. Under the caliphs it was ruled by persons appointed by them, and independent of the sheriffs of Mecca. When the power of the Abbassides declined, these deputies threw off their allegiance, and exercised the same influence in the northern Hejaz that the governors of Mecca did in the southern. The sheriffs, however, often succeeded in extending a temporary authority over Medina, and when Selim I. mounted the throne, he planted here a garrison of Turkish soldiers under the command of an aga, who was to be the military chief of the city; while the civil jurisdiction was placed in the hands of the Sheik el Haram or Prefect of the Temple, who was to correspond regularly with the capital, and to have the rank of a pasha. This mode of government, with the exception of a short period when the whole territory fell under the power of Mecca, continued till the time of the Wahabee invasion about thirty years ago. After the subjugation of that sect, Medina was again placed under the authority of a Turkish commander. The Aga el Haram takes the management of the pecuniary

business of the mosque, and of all ecclesiastical affairs. Next to him in importance is the *cadi*, though many of the native sheiks still enjoy great respect and consideration.

After a stay of three days at the City of the Prophet the caravans take their departure,—the Syrian returns to Damascus, and the Egyptian to Cairo, by way of Bedr, Akaba, and across the desert to Suez. The entire route of the former from Mecca occupies forty days, that of the latter thirty-seven: the caravan to Sanaa requires forty-three days. Bedr, famous for the battle fought by Mohammed in the second year of the Hejira, contains upwards of five hundred houses, and still boasts many relics of that miraculous engagement. The celebrated field, which laid the foundation of the Moslem empire lies south of the town about a mile distant at the foot of the hills.

Suez, about seventy miles from Cairo, and once a city of considerable wealth and splendour, is now reduced to a paltry half-ruined village;—a state of desolation chiefly owing to the ravages committed by the French, who thus avenged the opposition they experienced from the beys of Egypt. The walls and fortifications, which never were of much strength, are rapidly falling into decay. The harbour is spacious and safe, and near the shore are some well-built khans. The water is brackish and the air bad, occasioned by the extensive salt-marshes, which are filled with stagnant waters.\* The influence of this malaria the inhabitants endeavour to

---

\* A well was discovered in 1831, near Suez, by two English engineers, who made several experimental borings before they succeeded. A reservoir containing 1200 cubic feet of good water is now resorted to by the Bedouin and the pilgrim. By the applica-

counteract by drinking brandy ; but the mortality is not diminished, and fevers of a malignant kind prevail during the spring and summer. It is very thinly peopled, containing a mixture of Greeks, Copts, and Arabs. At the time of the pilgrimage and the departure of the fleet there is an influx of strangers ; but nobody will reside permanently except from the temptation of gain. There are neither merchants nor artisans, except a few Greek shipwrights,—this harbour being one of the few in the Gulf where vessels can be repaired. In ancient times the navigable canal (the bed of which, 115 feet wide, is still visible) that connected it with the fertile banks of the Nile made it an emporium of considerable celebrity ; but the disadvantages under which it labours from its situation at the extremity of a narrow sea, down which the winds blow with great force nine months in the year, render it unfit for the purposes of extensive trade. The government was formerly intrusted to a bey from Cairo, who kept a numerous household, though the Bedouins might be called complete masters of the place. Since the power of Ali Pasha has been established in Egypt, the authority of the native sheiks has ceased, and a dowlah nominated by the Turkish sultan is now the resident governor.

In travelling from Akaba to Suez, the hajjis often turn aside from the great route to visit the shrine of St Catherine and the pious monuments about Mount Sinai. The convent, though bearing the name of that saint as its vice-patroness, is dedicated to the Transfiguration. According to the accredited tradition of the place, it dates its origin from the fourth

---

tion of science the deserts of Arabia might perhaps be rendered habitable.—*Transact. of the Royal Asiat. Soc.* Capt. Head's *Journey*, p. 44.

century. Helena, the mother of Constantine the first Christian emperor, is said to have erected here a small church to commemorate the spot where the Lord appeared to Moses in the burning bush ; and in the garden of the convent a small tower or chapel is still shown, the foundation of which is said to have been laid by her. The piety of the empress was imitated by others, and in course of the next century similar buildings were erected in different parts of the neighbourhood ; but the ill treatment which the monks and hermits suffered from the Bedouins induced them to apply to Justinian ; and in compliance with their request he built a fortified convent capable of protecting them against their oppressors. Monastic establishments had then become prevalent ; and the generous emperor is said to have assigned the whole peninsula in property to the monks.

It was not till some years afterwards that it got possession of the corpse and obtained the name of St Catherine, who had suffered martyrdom at Alexandria, and was transported thence by angels to the highest peak of the adjacent mountains. Of this miracle one of the friars was informed in a vision ; and search being made, the body was found and entombed in the church, which thus acquired an additional claim to the veneration of the Greek Christians.

At the time of the Saracen conquests the number of priests and hermits belonging to this and other neighbouring establishments is said to have amounted to 6000 or 7000. Notwithstanding the continued danger to which they must have been exposed from these bigoted zealots, they contrived to defend their possessions against the attacks of the hostile tribes, not by any military array, but by the more successful arms of patience, meekness, and money. Under







Convent of Saint Catherine, Mount Sinai.

the sultans of Egypt they were charged with the protection of the haj-caravans to Mecca, on that part of the route which lay along the northern frontier of their territory. The increasing power of the Bedouins gradually impaired their influence and encroached on their possessions, until they were at length confined to the walls of their monastery.

The situation of the convent is wild and picturesque. It stands at the southern extremity of a green valley, in a narrow recess which is terminated by steep impending rocks. Its form is an irregular quadrangle of about 130 paces, having the appearance of a fortress, enclosed with high and solid walls of granite, and defended by several small towers. When the French were in Egypt, a part of the eastern wall which had fallen down was rebuilt by order of General Kleber. Within there are eight or ten small court-yards, some of which are neatly laid out in beds of flowers and vegetables ; a few date-trees and cypresses also grow there, besides a quantity of vines. The distribution of the interior apartments is very irregular. There is a great number of small rooms in the lower and upper stories, most of which are at present unoccupied. The principal edifice is the church, which was built by Justinian, though it has since undergone frequent repairs. It forms an oblong square ; the roof is supported by a double row of fine granite pillars, coated with white plaster ; and the floor is paved with beautiful slabs of marble. An abundance of silver lamps, paintings, and portraits of saints, adorn the walls round the altar ; among the latter is a large picture of the Transfiguration, portraits of Justinian, Theodora, and St Catherine, and a St Christopher with a dog's head. The silver lid of a sarcophagus likewise at-

tracts attention ; upon which is represented at full length the figure of the Empress Anne of Russia, who entertained the idea of being interred here, although the monks were disappointed of that honour. There are twenty-seven smaller churches or chapels dispersed over the convent, in many of which daily masses are read, and in all of them one at least every Sabbath. None of them have steeples ; and as there is but one bell, which is rung only on Sundays, it is customary to summon the monks to daily prayers by striking with a stick on a long piece of granite suspended from ropes, the sound of which is heard all over the premises. The call to vespers is made by striking a piece of dry wood in the same manner.

In former times every principal Christian sect, except Lutherans and Calvinists, had its chapel in the convent of Sinai ; but most of these have long been abandoned by their owners. What may be considered more remarkable is, that close by the great church stands a Mohammedan mosque spacious enough to contain two hundred people at prayers. It is said to have been built in the fifteenth or sixteenth century to prevent the destruction of the monastery, and is sometimes visited by straggling pilgrims. The greatest number of these is perhaps from sixty to eighty annually ; but so late as the last century regular haj-caravans used to come from Cairo as well as from Jerusalem ; 800 Armenians are stated to have arrived in one day, and 500 Copts on another occasion. Adjoining the convent is a pleasant well-stocked garden, which is entered by a subterraneous passage. It produces fruits and vegetables of various kinds, and of the finest quality.

The number of monks, most of whom are natives of the Greek islands, does not now exceed

twenty or thirty. They have a president or prior ; but the *economos* or steward is the true head of the community, and manages all its affairs. The superior of the whole order is the archbishop or *reis*, who is chosen by a council of delegates, and formally confirmed by the Greek patriarch of Jerusalem. In ancient times he resided in the convent ; but since its affairs have been on the decline it has been found expedient that he should live abroad ; the Bedouins considering his presence as entitling them to exact very high fees, especially on his entering the establishment. On this occasion 10,000 dollars (£2156) were sometimes demanded ; hence the monks, rather than purchase this honour so dearly, shut up the gate, and have dispensed with the archbishop's presence since the middle of the last century. Their discipline with regard to food and prayer is very severe. They all employ themselves in some profession ; and their little fraternity can boast of a cook, a distiller, a baker, a shoemaker, a tailor, a carpenter, a candle-maker, a mason, and other handicrafts, each of whom has his workshop, with a stock of rusty utensils, which still indicate traces of the former industry of the establishment. Brandy made from dates is the chief solace these recluses enjoy ; and they are permitted, even during their fasts, to indulge in this domestic beverage. They have a library which contains about 1500 Greek volumes and 700 Arabic manuscripts ; but of this they make little use, as they can read or write no language except their vernacular tongue. Notwithstanding their ignorance they are fond of seeing strangers in their wilderness, and always receive them with hospitality and kindness. As the gate has been long walled up, visitors and provisions are hoisted up by a windlass

with a rope and a noose ; a stick being fixed transversely to the lower end, which is let down from a window about forty feet from the ground.

The only habitual frequenters of the convent are the Bedouins. They are never indeed admitted within the walls ; but they have established the custom, that whoever amongst them, whether man, woman, or child, comes here, must be supplied with bread for breakfast and supper, which is lowered down in a basket. Scarcely a day passes that the inmates have not to feed thirty or forty persons ; and during the last century the demand was still heavier, as the Arabs had a privilege to call for a dish of cooked meat in addition to their allowance of bread. In consequence of this practice disputes continually happen : if the Bedouins are not satisfied with the distribution of food or fuel, they assail the monks, lay waste the garden, and throw stones or even fire their muskets from the surrounding heights into the convent. The priests in their turn are sometimes obliged to retaliate, for they have a well-furnished armoury and two small cannon ; but they take great care never to kill any of their assailants.

Notwithstanding the daily claims on their charity, the expenses of the monastery are supposed to be very moderate. The yearly consumption of corn Burckhardt estimates at 2500 bushels, and their annual expenditure at £1000 sterling. A considerable revenue must arise from their possessions abroad ; for besides the convent at Cairo, which contains a prior and about fifty monks, they have establishments and landed property in many other parts of the East, especially in the Archipelago and at Candia. They have also a small church at Calcutta, and another at Surat.

The mountains and deserts in the neighbourhood, being the scenery of many events in Scripture history, are pointed out by the hermits to the attention of their visitors. On Gebel Mousa is shown a small church dedicated to the Virgin ; a convent which bears the name of St Elias, erected on the spot where Elijah was fed by the ravens ; and a poor mosque without any ornaments, where the Bedouins slaughter sheep in honour of Moses, making vows to him and entreating his intercession with Heaven in their favour. At a small distance a place is shown in the rock, somewhat resembling the print of the forepart of the foot, which is said to be that of the Prophet, and is devoutly kissed by all the Moslem. The head of the golden calf which the Israelites worshipped, now changed into stone ; the place where the brazen serpent was erected ; the burialplace of Moses and Aaron ; the grotto where St Athanasius lived ; the spot touched by the foot of Mohammed's camel on its way to heaven ; the pulpit and petrified pot or kettle of Moses ; and the granite rock, resembling a chair, on which he sat and beheld the fight between Joshua and the Amalekites,—are among the sacred spots pointed out to the credulity of pilgrims, and identified by the brotherhood, who find it their interest to multiply objects of curiosity and veneration.

On the very summit of Gebel Mousa stands a church, which, though now much dilapidated, is an object of great attraction. The Arabs believe that the original tables of the commandments are buried under the pavement ; and they have made excavations on every side in the hope of finding them. They more particularly revere this spot from a belief that the rains which fall on the peninsula are under the immediate

control of Moses ; and they are persuaded that the monks of St Catherine are in possession of the *taourat*, or book which he sent down from heaven ; upon the opening and shutting of which depends the state of the weather. The reputation which the holy men have thus obtained of having the dispensation of rain in their hands sometimes becomes rather troublesome to them, especially as they have encouraged that superstitious belief with a view to enhance their own credit. By a natural inference the Bedouins have concluded, that if they can bring rain they have it likewise in their power to withhold it ; and, in consequence, whenever a dearth happens, they accuse them of malevolence, and often tumultuously assemble to compel their prayers. The same imputation they lay to their charge when violent floods happen to burst down the hills and destroy their cattle or date-trees. A peasant some years since, whose sheep and camels had been swept off by the torrent, went in a fury to the convent and fired his musket at it, exclaiming, “ You have opened the book so much that we are all drowned ! ” The monks pacified him with presents ; but, on departing, he begged that in future they would only open half the *taourat*, in order that the rains might be more moderate.

In a valley between Mount Moses and Mount Catherine stands the convent of the Forty Martyrs, with a good garden and an orchard of olive-trees. Near it is the Fountain of the Partridge (*Bir Shomar*), so named from having been revealed by one of these birds to the priests when they were removing the body of their patroness, and fainting with thirst. In the same valley a block of granite is shown as being the Rock of Meribah, out of which water is-

sued when struck by the rod of Moses. It lies quite insulated by the side of the path, and seems to have formerly belonged to Mount Sinai, which hangs in a variety of precipices all over the valley. Burckhardt says the block is about twelve feet in height, of an irregular shape, approaching to a cube. There are about twenty apertures on its surface, lying nearly in a straight line round its three sides, through which the water is said to have burst out. These fissures are, for the most part, ten or twelve inches long, two or three broad, and about the same in depth ; some of them appearing to be incrustated all over like the inside of a teakettle.

This stone is greatly venerated by the Bedouins, who put grass into the crevices as offerings to the memory of Moses, in the same manner as they place it upon the tombs of their saints ; this vegetable being to them the most precious gift of nature, and that upon which their existence depends. Shaw, Pococke, and the earlier travellers, in describing this rock, seem credulously to have adopted the extravagant legends of the monks. The former regards the incrustated apertures as the lively and demonstrative tokens of their having been anciently so many fountains ; and is of opinion that art or chance could by no means be concerned in the contrivance,—evidently afraid to injure the reputation of the Scripture miracle. More recent visitors have ventured, without impugning the truth of Sacred History, to question the antiquity and identity of this surprising block, and consider it one of the deceptions invented by the brothers of the convent, who have a personal interest in encouraging this superstition. Every observer, Burckhardt has remarked, must be convinced, on the slightest exa-



mination, that most of the crevices are the work of art,—three or four of them perhaps are natural,—and these may have given rise to the tradition. That the incrustation is the effect of moisture may be quite true ; for the adjoining rocks, where water is still dripping, are marked in the same manner ; so that if a fragment of the cliff were to fall down, it might be difficult in a few years to make a distinction between the two. What renders the locality of this venerated stone more suspicious, is the fact that this part of the desert abounds with perennial springs, which seems to prove decidedly that it cannot be the parched vale of Rephidim, “ where there was no water for the people to drink.” While, therefore, the miracle of Moses remains untouched, we may be permitted to doubt the accuracy of the monks and Bedouins, who are naturally pleased to see strangers struck with religious surprise at the same objects which they themselves revere, perhaps with all the sincerity of a conscientious belief.

Not far from Sinai a valley was discovered about the beginning of the eighteenth century, which created a considerable sensation in Europe from the rocks being covered with inscriptions in unknown characters and uncouth figures ; this was the famous *Gebel Mokkateb* or Written Mountain. Learned societies and several governments encouraged travellers to examine them ; and Mr Clayton, bishop of Clogher, offered £500 to defray the expenses of the journey, provided any man of letters would undertake to copy them. Expectations were entertained that these inscriptions might furnish some testimony concerning the passage of the Israelites through the Desert, or their residence in that country. But on nearer inspection these sanguine

hopes vanished. The carvings were found by those who examined them to be for the most part little else than the names of travellers or pilgrims, ill-engraved in Greek, Jewish, and Arabic characters. Crosses were seen among these hieroglyphics, and a great many drawings of mountain-goats and camels, the latter sometimes laden, or with riders. The whole sandstone cliffs, occasionally to the height of twelve or fifteen feet, are thickly covered with such delineations, which are continued for several miles with only a few intervals.

Different opinions have been entertained as to the age and purport of these writings; the most probable is that which ascribes them to the hajjis in the sixth century, who were in the habit, during the pilgrimage, of visiting the holy places about Sinai, or rather Mount Serbal; which Burckhardt supposes to have been anciently the principal place of devotion, from the circumstance that, though similar inscriptions abound in other parts, none are to be found at Gebel Mousa or Gebel Katerin. Pococke, Montague, Niebuhr, and other travellers, copied them; but little success has been made in deciphering their meaning, though, from what is known, the general opinion is that they are of no great importance. The top of the Written Mountain is covered with large stones inscribed with hieroglyphics, some of them standing upright, while others are lying flat. They appear to be sepulchral monuments with epitaphs, and may either indicate that the ruins in the neighbourhood were once populous cities, or be attributed to the well-known propensity of the Arabs to bury their dead on high places. There are few of the Bedouin tribes who have not one or more tombs of sheiks or protecting saints on the top

of the hills, in whose honour they still offer sacrifice. A goat is piously slain at the sepulchre of Aaron on Mount Hor ; and the tomb of Sheik Saleh, near Sinai, ranks next in veneration to the Mount of Moses. On its rude walls are suspended silk tassels, handkerchiefs, ostrich-eggs, halters, bridles, and similar articles, as votive gifts. Once a-year all the tribes of the Towara Arabs in their best attire repair to the spot, and remain encamped three days ; during which many sheep are sacrificed, camel-races run, and the nights spent in dancing and singing. Mercantile transactions are usually connected with these sepulchral pilgrimages ; and fairs are annually held on the spots where the bones of the patriarchs and prophets are supposed to rest.

The only other place in this interesting peninsula, connected with the hermits of Sinai, is the small convent of El Bourg near Tor. Here they possess a spacious enclosure stocked with date-trees, whence the fruit is conveyed to their monastery, where it is used for making brandy. A solitary monk inhabits the little fort built close to the garden-wall ; and, notwithstanding his care in drawing up the ladder by which he ascends to his habitation, he is not unfrequently subjected to the visits of the Bedouins, who from time to time levy a contribution of bread and provisions as the price of their protection. Tor has been identified, on account of its springs and palm-groves, with the ancient Elim ; but this seems to rest on no better authority than many other traditions. The town is described as a wretched assemblage of huts, in the occupation of a few families drawn together by its waters and fruit-trees. The fortress is said to have been built by the Portuguese, but is now in a



Convent of El Bourg near Tor.



state of decay. A few miles to the north, and within a short distance of the sea, lies the Gebel Narkous or Mountain of the Bell, which is said to emit a sound "sometimes resembling musical glasses, sometimes like one piece of metal struck against another." This phenomenon is variously explained by travellers. The Arabs believe that the bell belongs to a convent buried under the sand. The Greeks have their legends about saints, demons, and genii, who celebrate their respective mysteries under this incomprehensible precipice. Mr Fazakerley says the sound was louder or softer, according as the sand was more or less pressed; and that at the same time a quivering or vibration was very sensibly felt. Burckhardt observed nothing that could throw any light on it; nor did he discover the slightest mark of volcanic action, to which he supposed the thundering noise might be attributable. Perhaps the miracle may be explained by the existence of a cavity underneath, in which steam or rarefied air is generated; or by the moving of the fine white sand, of which the bank is composed, over the moister and harder sand beneath.\*

---

\* Similar sounds are not uncommon in other parts of the world (See Edinburgh Cabinet Library, No. X. pp. 235-36). In a paper lately read before the Geological Society in London, Sir John Herschel suggests as the only probable explanation which occurred to him of the sounds at Narkous, that they are caused by the generation and condensation of subterraneous steam; and belong to the same class of phenomena as the combustion of a jet of hydrogen gas in glass tubes. He makes the general remark, that wherever extensive subterraneous caverns exist, communicating with each other or with the atmosphere by means of small orifices, considerable difference of temperature may occasion currents of air to pass through those apertures with sufficient velocity for producing sonorous vibrations. The sounds described by Humboldt, as heard at sunrise by those who sleep on certain granitic rocks on the banks of the Orinoco, may be explained on this principle.

## CHAPTER VII.

*History of the Wahabees.*

Origin of the Wahabees—Their Founder, Abdel Wahab—Account of their Doctrines—Success of Ibn Saoud and Abdelazeez in Nejed—Siege and Plunder of Kerbela—Submission of Mecca and Medina—Destruction of religious Monuments—Murder of Abdelazeez—Accession of Saoud—His Character—Government—Revenues—Military Tactics—Revival of the Pilgrimage—Predatory Incursions of the Wahabees—Attempts of the Turkish Government to suppress them—Expedition from Egypt lands at Yembo—Defeat of Toussein Bey at Jedeida—Recapture of Medina by the Turks—Thomas Keith, a Native of Edinburgh, made Governor of the City—Recovery of Mecca and Hejaz—Mohammed Ali takes the Command in Person—Arrest and Death of Ghaleb—Repulse of the Turks at Taraba—Capture of Goufode—Death of Saoud—Accession of Abdallah—Strength of the Turkish Army—Defeat of the Wahabees at Bissel—Surrender of Taraba and Beishe—Cruelties of Ali—His Return to Egypt—Campaign of Toussein in Nejed—Treaty of Peace with Abdallah—Treachery of Ali and Renewal of Hostilities—Expedition under Ibrahim Pasha—His Success in Nejed—Siege and Surrender of Deraiah—Death of Abdallah—Suppression of the Wahabees and Destruction of their Capital—Reflections on the Character of their Government and Religion.

ONE of the most remarkable revolutions which Arabia has witnessed since the days of Mohammed, was that effected by the Wahabees, a religious sect, who evinced in their military enthusiasm all the ardour and intolerance of the early Saracens. Their founder, from whom they took their name, was Abdel Wahab, of the pastoral tribe of Temin, in Nejed, and of

the clan called El Wahabe, of which his father was sheik. He was born in 1691 at the village of El Ayeneh, in the province of El Ared. In his youth he had visited Mecca, Medina, Bussora, Bagdad, and various other schools of the principal cities in the East; and being convinced, by what he had observed during his travels, that the primitive faith of Islam had become totally corrupted in practice, and that by far the greater part of Turks and Persians were heretics, he determined to assume the character of a reformer. His manners were naturally grave and austere; while his talents and learning secured for him the respect of his countrymen, among whom he made several converts by means of his writings and his reputation for wisdom.

The religion and government of this sect may be very briefly defined, as a Mohammedan puritanism joined to a Bedouin phylarchy, in which the great chief is both the political and religious leader of the nation. In their creed they are perfectly orthodox. The unity of God is the fundamental principle of their faith. They believe in the Prophet, but regard him as a man essentially mortal, though gifted with a divine mission. They reject the fables and false glosses of the Koran, acknowledging only the traditions of the Sonnees. As they consider all men equal in the sight of God, they hold it sinful to invoke the intercession of departed saints, or to honour their mortal remains more than those of any other person. Hence chapels, cupolas, and monuments, where reverence was paid to their memory, they condemned as an abomination, and forbade them to be visited. To swear by Mohammed is criminal; and they accuse the Turks of idolatry when they give



him the title of lord in their prayers, or revere him in a manner which approaches adoration.

In morals they were pure and rigid ; they reprobated the use of spirituous liquors and other exhilarating substitutes ; they condemned all sensual indulgences, the neglect of justice and almsgiving, the common practice of fraud and treachery, usury, games of chance, and the other vices with which even the sacred cities were polluted. In the true spirit of fanaticism, they were as zealous about the inferior as the weightier matters of the law. Next to the war which they declared against saints and sepulchres, their indignation was principally turned against dress and luxury : they strictly forbade the wearing of silk and the smoking of tobacco ; and cut from their heads the only tuft of hair which their early Moslem discipline had left them. Among other unwarrantable acts which they abolished, was that of praying over the rosary, and lamenting the dead, thinking it impious to mourn for the soul of a brother in heaven. They did not, however, so far strip themselves of all superstition as to abolish the ceremonies of ablution and the Meccan pilgrimage, or even those of kissing the black stone and throwing pebbles at the devil.

The doctrines of Abdel Wahab, it will be seen, were not those of a new religion ; though they were so represented by his enemies, and have been described as such by several European travellers.\* His

---

\* The tenets of the Wahabees were erroneously stated by Rousseau (1808) in his "Description of the Pashalic of Bagdad ;" and in a Memoir of this Sect in the "Mines de l'Orient." What is said of them in Niebuhr and Valentia is not very correct. The best and fullest account of them is given by Burckhardt, Mons. Corancez, and Mengin (Append. tome ii).

sole guide was the Koran and the orthodox traditions; and his efforts were entirely directed to remove corruptions and abuses, and restore the faith of Islam to its original purity. Whether this great reformer, when he preached to his countrymen in the villages of Nejed, had any idea of establishing a new dynasty to reign over the proselytes of Arabia is much to be doubted. Neither his birth, nor the strength of his tribe, could authorize him in entertaining such a design. But it cannot be denied that his doctrines had a favourable effect on the people, by suppressing the infidel indifference which universally prevailed, and which has generally a more baneful effect on the morals of a nation than the decided acknowledgment even of a false religion.

To trace the history of this sect, from its origin to the vast ascendancy which it gained in Arabia, were merely to record events similar to those which daily occur in the feudal wars of the desert. It was about the year 1746, when Abdel Wahab was compelled, by order of the Governor of El Hassa, to quit his native village, where for eight years, in the capacity of sheik, he had peaceably disseminated his opinions, and made converts of several neighbouring chiefs. Having escaped the poniard of an assassin, he repaired to Deraiah, and obtained a friendly asylum from Mohammed ibn Saoud, sheik of the Beni Mokren, a branch of the Wold Ali belonging to the Aeneze tribe. Here he continued to inculcate his doctrines, which soon gained credit enough to encourage the extension of his project, and enable him to employ force to subdue the refractory. Of the numerous hordes scattered over the central wastes, some offered their voluntary submission, while others com-

bined against him, and refused to acknowledge either his temporal or spiritual authority. To increase the activity of the new missionaries, they were diligently instructed in regard to the merit of using arms to convince heretics and infidels. The temptations of plunder were added to the stimulants of religious zeal ; and a share of the booty taken in battle was always distributed among the conquerors, according to the strict law of the Koran.

It does not appear that the great founder of the sect himself assumed any other character than that of their apostle or ecclesiastical ruler. His constant residence was at Deraiah until his death in 1787, when he had reached the advanced age of 95. He possessed in a high degree the art of persuasion, and is said to have captivated all hearts by his eloquence. Equally distinguished as an able politician and an intrepid warrior, he maintained to the last the influence which he had gained by his sword over the destinies of Arabia. He had all the uxorious propensities of Mohammed, and his twenty wives produced him eighteen children.

The first military champion of the new doctrines, and the political founder of the Wahabee government, was Mohammed ibn Saoud, who had married the daughter of Abdel Wahab. When he commenced his missionary exploits under the title of emir, accompanied by his eldest son Abdelazeez, his force was so small, that in his first skirmish with the enemy he had with him only seven camel-riders. While the venerable apostle contented himself with making proselytes at Deraiah; the two warriors successively conquered Nejed, and most of the great Bedouin tribes who annually visited

that territory in quest of pasturage. The earliest and most formidable of their opponents was Erar, sheik of El Hassa. The first army which he sent against them, in 1757, was defeated. Again he made his appearance in person, at the head of 4000 men, with four pieces of artillery, and laid siege to Deraiah ; but he was again repulsed, and compelled to retreat in great disorder. The death of Ibn Saoud, in 1765, left Abdelazeez sole commander of the sectarian army ; and by his bravery and indefatigable efforts their victories were pushed to the remotest provinces of Arabia. Mekrami, sheik of Nejeran, from being an enemy became a devoted follower ; the Sheriff of Abu-Arish was also reduced to obedience, and by their means the new doctrines were spread from the coast of Bahrein to the confines of Mocha and Aden. As the cattle and spoils of the unconverted were unceremoniously seized by the Wahabees, a title by which they now became known, numbers turned proselytes to save their property, and testified the sincerity of their faith by attacking and plundering their neighbours.

After many hard struggles the whole of the Nejed had embraced the reformed doctrines. It had also assumed a new political condition ; and instead of being divided as formerly into a number of small independent territories or clanships, perpetually at war with each other, it became the seat of a formidable power, under a chief whose authority, like that of the first caliphs, was supreme both in civil and spiritual affairs. Yet hostilities had not been declared ; nor did the Wahabees encroach upon the rights of the two governments nearest to them,—Bagdad and Hejaz. The pilgrim-caravans passed

through their land without molestation. They were even on friendly terms with Serour, sheriff of Mecca, and, in 1781, obtained leave to perform their devotions at the Kaaba. Their increase of power seems at first to have excited the jealousy of Sheriff Ghaleb; and within a few years after his accession to the government he had declared open war against them, which was carried on in the Bedouin style, interrupted only by a few shortlived truces. Being then in regular correspondence with the Porte, he left no means untried for prejudicing the Ottoman government against the sectarians. He represented them as infidels; and their treatment of the Turkish hajjis did not remove this unfavourable opinion. Similar accounts were given by the pashas of Bagdad, who had seen the neighbouring country assailed almost annually by these invaders, who exacted a capitation-tax from all Persian devotees that crossed the desert.

No place on the eastern border seemed better adapted than Bagdad for pushing the war into the heart of the enemy's territory; and, in 1797, Solyman Pasha despatched an expedition to attack Deralah, consisting of 4000 or 5000 Turkish troops, and twice that number of allied Arabs, under the command of his lieutenant-governor. Instead of advancing directly to the capital, they laid siege to the fortified citadel of Hassa, which resisted their efforts above a month, until the arrival of a strong force under Saoud, the son of Abdelazeez, determined them to retreat. The Wahabee chief anticipated this measure, and endeavoured to intercept their return, by throwing camel-loads of salt which he had brought for the purpose into the wells on their line

of march. The soldiers of Bagdad were thus compelled to halt; and for three days the two armies continued within sight of each other, but without venturing on an attack. A truce for six years was at length concluded, and both parties quietly dispersed to their homes.

The failure of this expedition was fatal to the success of the Turks, as the Wahabees had now learned to despise them. The peace was soon broken; and, in 1801, Saoud at the head of 20,000 men attacked Kerbela, so famed for the magnificent tomb or mosque of Hossein, which had long attracted the devotion of the Moslem. The town was entered, after a very slight resistance, by means of palm-trunks placed against the wall, and five thousand persons were massacred. While executing this horrible butchery, a fanatical doctor cried from the top of a tower, "Kill, strangle, all infidels who give companions to God!" In their fury they spared none but old men, women, and children. Their indignation was specially directed against the sepulchre, which was filled with the riches of Turkey and Persia. The cupola with its golden ornaments was thrown down; and in this act the spoilers were heard to exclaim, "God have mercy upon those who destroyed, and none upon those who built them!" Treasures were found to a vast amount, which had accumulated in proportion to the excessive veneration of the pilgrims. Over the tomb was suspended a huge pearl; near it were deposited twenty sabres mounted with precious stones; these, together with vases, lamps, rubies, emeralds, diamonds, and articles of gold and silver, became the property of Saoud. The houses were stript of their valuable furniture; 4000 Cashmere shawls, 2000

swords, and as many muskets, were piled in one heap for distribution when the troops evacuated the place, which in five days they had reduced to a mass of smoking ruins.

While the Wahabees were occupied on the banks of the Euphrates, Ghaleb penetrated into Nejed and took possession of Shara, a small town in the province of Kasym. In his campaigns he had hitherto been alternately victor and vanquished; but Abdelazeez, extending his views with his conquests, now began to invade Hejaz with more zeal and perseverance than he had ever before manifested. Already Saoud had carried the arms and the faith of his father among the mountain-tribes on the confines of Yemen, where Abu Nocta, the sheik of Azir, was left in charge of the new proselytes. The tribes eastward of Mecca were obliged to yield; and the country was intrusted to the command of Othman el Medaife, brother-in-law to Ghaleb, but who had for some years been at enmity with his kinsman. In 1802, he besieged Tajf, which was taken after a vigorous resistance, and condemned to share the fate of Kerbela;—with this difference, that the soldiers had orders to spare neither old age nor infancy. Eight hundred males were put to the sword; but the harems were respected. Many houses were burnt, and the whole were plundered. All the holy tombs were destroyed; among others that of Al Abbas, the uncle of Mohammed, celebrated throughout Arabia for its beauty and its sanctity. The palace and fine gardens of the sheriff were desolated; but his treasures had been carried to Mecca. These successes emboldened the Wahabees, and for the first time they interdicted the pilgrim-caravans.

In the following year, they effected the total conquest of Hejaz. Saoud and Othman, after several battles with Ghaleb, approached Mecca, and pitched their camp within an hour and a half's distance of the city. The eastern suburb was attacked and taken possession of, and from that point frequent sallies were made into the town. The governor, undismayed, defended himself with great bravery. He laid a mine near his palace, which obliged the assailants to make a temporary retreat. But the supply of water was cut off by diverting the canal of Arafat; and the inhabitants, after a siege of two or three months, were reduced to extreme necessity for want of provisions. Dogs and cats were eagerly devoured; the only stores were at the disposal of the sheriff and his warriors; and when these were consumed he retired towards Jidda, carrying off the whole of his family and baggage, having previously set fire to his palace to destroy such furniture as was not easily portable. The city was now abandoned to its fate. On the next morning, the chief inhabitants went out to capitulate, or rather to surrender at discretion; and on the same day (April 27) Saoud made his entrance. Not the slightest excess was committed; and the Meccawees still remember with gratitude the excellent discipline observed by the wild Bedouin soldiers. All the shops were immediately opened by order of the victorious chief, and every article which his troops required was purchased with ready money. This forbearance was doubtless the effect of policy; but the artful conqueror ascribed it to a miracle. He told the ulemas in full council, that he had seen Mohammed in a dream, who threatened him that he should not



survive three days if a single grain of corn were forcibly taken from the holy city. But the displeasure of the Prophet did not extend to those objects of idolatry which offended the religious prejudices of the Wahabees. Above eighty splendid tombs, which covered the remains of the descendants of the Apostle, and formed the great ornaments of Mecca, were levelled with the ground; nor was the monument of the favourite and venerable Kadijah saved. The coffeehouses, or rather shops for spirituous liquors, next felt the desolating zeal of the Reformers. Piles of hookahs and Persian pipes were collected from these haunts and burnt in the presence of Saoud. The use of brandy and tobacco were prohibited under severe penalties; and the inhabitants were obliged to conform, outwardly at least, to the new creed, by abandoning their luxuries and rich dresses, and being more punctual in their devotions. Prayers for the sultan in the grand mosque were ordered to be abolished; the government was placed in the hands of Abdel Main, the brother of Ghaleb; and in the following epistle this memorable conquest was communicated to the Ottoman Porte:—

“SAOUD TO SELIM.—I entered Mecca on the 4th day of Moharram, in the 1218th year of the Hejira. I kept peace towards the inhabitants. I destroyed all the tombs that were idolatrously worshipped. I abolished the levying of all customs above two and a half per cent. I confirmed the *cadi* whom you had appointed to govern in the place, agreeably to the commands of Mohammed. I desire, that in the ensuing years you will give orders to the pashas of Sham (Damascus) and Mesr (Cairo) not to come accompanied with the *mahmal*, trumpets, and drums,

into Mecca and Medina. For why? Religion is not profited by these things. Peace be between us; and may the blessing of God be unto you!—Dated on the 10th day of Moharram." (May 3, 1803.)

From Mecca the Reformer turned his arms against Jidda; but the interval had allowed Ghaleb time to prepare for his reception by mounting the walls with cannon from the vessels in the harbour. For eleven days the town was besieged; the supplies of water were cut off, in consequence of which numbers perished of thirst. But the inhabitants fought bravely, and the Wahabee chief, despairing of victory, was obliged to retreat; though some allege this forbearance was purchased with a bribe of 30,000 dollars (£6496, 15s.) While Saoud directed his march towards the northern desert, the other issued from his stronghold, and resumed the government of Mecca. Knowing that he could not defend the place for any length of time, he compromised matters with the invader; and in consideration of his influence and high station he obtained more favourable terms than were usually granted to other proselyte chiefs. The capture of this city was the signal for other advantages in Hejaz. The powerful tribe of Harb were compelled to yield, but not without a severe contest; and their submission was followed by the surrender of Yembo.

Early in the spring of 1804, Medina was added to the Wahabee conquests. The inhabitants, being more attached to the Turkish interest than the Meccawees, were not so leniently treated. The usual tribute was required, but private property was not injured. Saoud's first care was to demolish the tombs and strip them of all their valuable ornaments. During the siege a considerable part of the treasures of the

great mosque, more especially the golden vessels, had been seized by the governor of the town, Hassan el Khalaji, ostensibly for the purpose of relieving the general distress; but they were finally distributed among his own friends. The remainder fell a prey to the Wahabec general, who entered the sacred hejra himself, and penetrated behind the curtain of the Prophet's tomb, where he laid his sacrilegious hands on every thing valuable that could be found. Among these hoarded treasures the most remarkable is said to have been a brilliant star set in diamonds and pearls, which was suspended directly over the coffin. Around it were deposited many costly vessels set with jewels, earrings, bracelets, necklaces, and other ornaments, sent as presents from all parts of the empire, but principally brought by the great hajjis who passed through the city. Of this collection he sold part to the Sheriff of Mecca, and carried the remainder with him to Deraiâh, which is said to have consisted chiefly of pearls and corals. The total value of the booty was estimated at more than 300,000 dollars (£64,687, 10s.); though there is good reason for supposing that the donations of the Faithful, accumulated there for ages, must have amounted to a much greater sum, had not the governors of the town or the guardian of the sepulchre occasionally relieved their necessities by large drafts from this religious exchequer. Allured by its glittering appearance, the Wahabees attempted to destroy the lofty dome, and throw down the gilded globe and crescent which surmount it; but the solid structure and the leaden covering rendered this a difficult undertaking; and as two of the workmen slipped from the roof and were precipitated to the ground,

the work of destruction was abandoned ;—a circumstance ascribed to a visible miracle wrought by the Prophet in favour of his monument. The tomb itself was left uninjured ; but Saoud prohibited as idolatrous all visits, prayers, or adorations addressed to it ; no other mark of devotion being allowed but the regular pilgrimage. Here, as at Mecca, the due observance of prayer, and the negation of silk and tobacco, were imposed with great strictness. At the appointed hours a body of Arabs, armed with large sticks, had orders to patrol the streets and drive the inhabitants to the common place of worship. The names of all the adult males were called over in the mosque after morning, noonday, and evening prayers, and such as did not answer to the roll were punished. A respectable woman, accused of having smoked a hookah, was paraded through the streets on a jackass, with the pipe suspended from her neck, round which was twisted the long flexible tube.

Between the capture of Mecca and that of Medina happened the death of Abdelazeez, who was assassinated, in October 1803, by a Persian whose relations the Wahabees had murdered. His eldest son Saoud was unanimously elected his successor ; and in the necessary qualities of a religious leader he far surpassed his father. He had been trained to war from his youth, having carried arms in battle when only at the age of twelve. For many years he had conducted all the wars ; and to him may be ascribed the conquest of Hejaz. From the time, however, that his reign began, it was remarked that he never fought personally in any engagement, but always directed his army from a position at some distance in the rear. In person he is said to have

been remarkably handsome ; he had a fine countenance, and wore a longer beard than is generally seen among the Bedouins ;—a peculiarity which obtained him the name of *Abu Shouareb* or Father of Mustachios. All the Arabs, even his enemies, praised him for his wisdom and moderation, his love of justice and skill in deciding litigations.

For several years after his father's death he wore a coat-of-mail under his shirt, and never went abroad except with a chosen guard around him. His dominions he divided into several districts or provinces, over which he placed the great Bedouin sheiks, with the honorary title of emirs ; whose principal duty it was to execute public justice, to assist the tax-gatherers, and recruit troops for the army. The vigilant and rigid policy which they were compelled to maintain tended to secure the country against robbers, and to check the sanguinary feuds of hostile parties ; but the new system was not popular, and the frequent revolts of the Bedouins proved how impatient they were of restraints so directly opposed to their habits of wild and lawless independence. The several tribes were made responsible for every depredation committed within their territory, should the perpetrator be unknown ; and if they had neglected to repel or resist the aggression, they were amerced in a fine equivalent to the amount of the cattle or other property that had been carried off.

The revenues of the Wahabees had been established on a plan similar to that prescribed by Mohammed. On fields watered solely by rain Saoud levied a tithe of the crops ; but he was content with only a twentieth part from grounds

where the labour and expense of artificial irrigation were necessary. Merchants paid yearly two and a half per cent. on their capital, though they seldom returned an account of more than one-fourth of their property. The most considerable portion of his revenue was drawn from his own domains. As he made it a rule, whenever any of the conquered cities or districts rebelled, to plunder them for the first offence and confiscate for the second, most of the landed property in Nejed had accrued to the public treasury (*Beit el Mal*), and was let out to farmers, who were obliged to pay a third, or a half, of the produce, according to circumstances. Many villages of Hejaz, the pastures near the Syrian Desert, and the mountains towards Yemen, were thus attached to the exchequer at Demajiah. The sheiks were not allowed any concern in the taxes, but they met the collectors at the spots appointed for payment, which were generally watering-places, where the people were directed to repair.

The income of Saoud was much more than sufficient to defray the public expenditure, though it was by no means so great as was generally reported. The largest amount, according to Burckhardt's information, in one year was 2,000,000 of dollars (£431,250); but on an average it did not exceed 1,000,000 annually. The outlay for military purposes must have been trifling, as there was no standing army and no regular pay. The costliest part of the establishment were his guests and his horses. Of the latter he had no fewer than 2000 as his own property; for some of which he gave the extravagant price of £500 or £600. When an expedition was meditated against the enemy, the sheiks levied soldiers

by a kind of conscription, from every village, camp, or family, under their control, according to its population ; and the corps was again dissolved as soon as the campaign was over. All from the age of eighteen to sixty, whether married or unmarried, were required to attend. On pressing emergencies no numbers were mentioned ; the chief merely said, " We shall not count those who join the army, but those who stay behind ;" a summons which was understood to include every man capable of bearing arms.

The necessary provisions for a soldier during one campaign were reckoned to be 100 lbs. of flour, 50 lbs. or 60 lbs. of dates, 20 lbs. of butter, a water-skin, and a sack of wheat or barley for the camel.

Stratagems and sudden invasions being most favourable for their purpose, no other mode of warfare was practised. When Saoud planned an incursion, the object of it was known to himself alone. He assembled the emirs at a certain point, generally a watering-station, which was always selected so as to deceive the enemy. If the march was intended for the northward, the place of rendezvous was appointed several days' journey to the south ; the foe was then taken completely by surprise ; and such were the caution and celerity with which these attacks were executed that they seldom failed of success. They were made at all seasons of the year, even in the sacred month of Ramadan. The army was always preceded by a vanguard of 30 or 40 horsemen ; and if they were obliged to advance under night, the chief and all the principal sheiks had torches carried before them. In coming to close action the troops were divided into three or four squadrons, one behind another ; the first com-

posed of horsemen and the second of camel-riders, these being reckoned the main strength of the army. The bravest and most renowned of Saoud's warriors were his bodyguard, about 300 in number, who were constantly kept as a corps of reserve. They usually fought in complete armour, and had their horses covered with a quilted woollen stuff called *lebs*, impenetrable to lances or swords. To all who fell in battle he ensured the enjoyment of paradise; and when the mare of a slain sheik galloped back to the ranks with an empty saddle, it was hailed as the happy tidings that a true believer had exchanged his cotton keffie for a crown of martyrdom.

At the time of his accession nearly the whole extent of Arabia had been reduced to submission. It was seldom thought advisable to garrison any district that he had subdued, the influence of the sheik whom he placed over it, and the terror of his own name, being generally sufficient to keep the vanquished in subjection. When some of the more powerful tribes relaxed in their allegiance, or became irregular in the payment of tribute, three or four flying expeditions were sent against them, which soon brought them back to obedience. The dread of losing their crops and their cattle overcame the scruples of the most refractory; and Saoud was often heard to say, "That no Arabs had ever been staunch Wahabees until they had suffered two or three times from the plundering of his troops." Medina was the only instance where it was found necessary to keep a constant military force, the inhabitants being naturally hostile to his religion and his government. In Mecca the power of Ghaleb was still considerable, and at Jidda his authority



remained in full force ; but his great talents for intrigue, his venerable office, and his personal influence over several Bedouin tribes, induced his rival to keep on amicable terms with him.

Since the conquest of Hejaz most of the regular pilgrim-caravans had ceased, rather than submit to the conditions which the reformers exacted. Only a few succeeded in making their way, and these were chiefly Moggrebins, Abyssinians, and Indians, who showed more humility than the other Moslem. For several years this state of matters continued ; but the pilgrimage, so far from being abolished, as some travellers have alleged, might have continued without interruption, had the terms and safe-conduct of the Wahabees been accepted. Saoud was punctual in his annual visits to Mecca, and was always accompanied with numbers of his followers, whose enthusiasm, as described by an eyewitness (Ali Bey), must have put laxer Mussulmans to the blush. Columns of half-naked men, with matchlocks on their shoulders and khunjers in their belts, pressed towards the Temple to perform the towaf and kiss the black stone. Impatient of delay, they precipitated themselves upon the spot, some of them opening their way with sticks in their hands. Confusion was soon at its height ; and in the tumult the devotees were prevented from hearing the voices of their guides or the commands of their chiefs.

In making the seven circuits their movements were accelerated by mutual impulse, until they resembled a swarm of bees flitting in rapid disorder round the Kaaba ; and by their tumultuous pressure breaking all the lamps near it with the muskets

which they carried on their shoulders. These ceremonies done, they rushed to the Zemzem Well, but in such crowds, and with such precipitation, that in a few moments, ropes, buckets, and pulleys, were laid in ruins. The servants abandoned their posts; and in this emergency the Wahabees contrived to obtain the miraculous liquid, by forming a chain of each other's hands, which enabled them to descend to the water. Unfortunately for the numerous charities of the mosque the reformers had brought no money with them. The well required alms, and the officers of the Temple expected their gratuities; and these pious debts the Bedouins discharged by giving them twenty or thirty grains of very coarse gunpowder, small bits of lead, or a few grains of coffee. The guides that repeated their prayers, and the barbers who shaved their heads, were paid in the same coin. • On these occasions Saoud, perhaps dreading the fate of his father, always kept himself surrounded with his chosen guard, even while making his turns round the Kaaba; and, instead of seating himself during his devotions in the usual place, he mounted on the roof of the well, as being a more safe position.

While Hejaz thus remained tranquil, the Wahabees chiefly directed their expeditions against their neighbours in the east and the north. The district about Bussora being rich in cattle and dates, the banks of the Shat el Arab and of the Euphrates up to Anah, were the scenes of their annual attacks. • A negro slave of Saoud's called Hark, at the head of a strong detachment, made various excursions into the Syrian Desert, and frightened the Arab tribes in the vicinity of Aleppo. In 1810, the plains of Hauran were in-

vaded by the commander in person ; and so rapid and unexpected were his movements, that although it required more than a month to arrive at the point of attack, thirty-five villages were sacked and laid in ashes by his soldiers, before the Pasha of Damascus, who had only two days' notice of his approach, could make any demonstrations of defence. Towards the south the Wahabees were not idle in extending the influence of their arms over some of the still unconquered provinces. Abu Nokta, near the close of 1804, descended with a numerous body of Arabs from the mountains, and spread dismay over the country. The towns of Loheia and Hodeida were plundered ; after which he retired to the hills, where he kept the whole frontier of Yemen in check till his death in 1809. Sanaa, however, does not seem to have been made the object of attack. Saoud had repeatedly offered the plunder of that rich city to Hamoud and Abu Nokta, by way of attaching them to his interest ; but he never actually ordered either of them to undertake the conquest of it, probably from a wish to reserve that enterprise for himself. The extensive districts of Hadramaut and Oman offered a tempting booty, and were harassed by frequent plundering incursions. The sovereigns of these principalities had rendered their homage to the Wahabee chief, and agreed to pay an annual tribute ; but in a single year they threw off their submission to him, and his arms were, then too much occupied in another quarter to effect their reduction. The islet of Bahrein and the Joassamee pirates had embraced the new doctrines, and carried them into profitable operation by harassing the commerce on the Gulf ; but the power of Saoud on that coast

sustained an irreparable loss in the destruction of Ras el Khyma, by the English expedition from Bombay.

Although the Wahabees had come to open hostilities with the Turkish government, since they had interrupted the haj-caravans and forbidden the people to pray in their mosques for the welfare of the sultan, yet the Porte had hitherto remained almost inactive. Yussuf, pasha of Damascus, in 1809, made indeed some faint preparations for attacking the district of Jof. But this was merely a vain demonstration of his zeal, as the expedition never took place. The immense deserts that extended between the Syrian and Arabian capitals rendered it impossible to transport sufficient provisions and ammunition for a regular campaign; and made it obvious that, if ever the Turkish influence was to be restored over the holy cities, the effort for dispossessing the Wahabees must proceed from Egypt, on which the Hejazees almost exclusively depended for the common necessities of life. The turbulent state of that country, and the insubordination of the Mamlouk Beys, for some time prevented Mohammed Ali, who had been appointed pasha by the Porte in 1804, from adopting any warlike measures against a foreign enemy. Much might have been done, however, towards the reduction of Hejaz, by merely shutting the ports of Suez and Cosseir against the Arabian shipping; but the viceroy, notwithstanding the firmans from Constantinople, had too deep an interest in the traffic of the Red Sea to sanction a prohibitory system, which would have cut off the gains that flowed into his coffers from that channel.

Ambition at length overruled the passion of ava-

rice in the breast of Ali. The deliverance of the sepulchres was likely to add a celebrity to his name, that would exalt him far above all the pashas in the Turkish empire. To stimulate his exertions the sultan promised him the pashalic of Damascus for one of his sons, so soon as he should obtain possession of Mecca and Medina. As it was essential to have a sufficient flotilla at his command for the conveyance of troops and provisions, he caused 28 large and small vessels (from 100 to 250 tons burden) to be built at Suez, which kept about 1000 workmen for three years in constant employment.

In August 1811, this armada was ready for departure. Toussoun Bey, the second son of the pasha, a youth of eighteen, who had given proofs of extraordinary courage in the Mamlouk war, was placed in command. The expedition consisted of two parts, cavalry and infantry; the former amounting to a body of about 800 men, Turks and Bedouins; and the latter, composed principally of Arnaout soldiers, to the number of 1500 or 2000, under the direction of Saleh Aga and Omar Aga. In October, the fleet reached Yembo, which capitulated after a feeble resistance of two days. The town was not garrisoned by Wahabees, but by some troops belonging to the sheriff, who had declared himself a proselyte and an ally of Saoud.

Several months were consumed in negotiations; for Ghaleb, when he heard of the formidable armament of Ali Pasha, had thought it advisable to enter into a secret correspondence with him, in which he communicated much information as to the actual state and force of the enemy; and promised to throw off his allegiance to them on the first appearance of

a respectable Turkish army in Hejaz. Toussoun, however, soon discovered that the state of the country was by no means such as he had expected from the representations of the sheriff, who was evidently not sincere in his offers of friendship, and only waiting to join the stronger party. The inhabitants were too much overawed by the vigilance and power of Saoud, to stir without some more decided prospect of ultimate success. A few of the Bedouins in the neighbourhood of Yembo were all he was able to detach from the Wahabees.

To put an end to this state of fruitless inactivity, Toussoun resolved to attack Medina, wisely judging this step more prudent than marching towards Jidda or Mecca, where the stratagems of the sheriff might have been as fatal to him as the arms of Saoud. Leaving a garrison at Yembo, he set out on his expedition in January 1812. The towns of Bedr and Safra were taken after a slight skirmish. At the village of Jedeida the road leads through a narrow passage between steep and rugged mountains. In this defile, which extends in length about one hour and a half, the Turkish army was at once assailed by the united force of the Harbs and Wahabees, who thickly covered the precipices on both sides, to the number of 20,000 infantry, and from 600 to 800 horsemen, commanded by Abdallah and Faisal, two of the sons of Saoud. Instead of retreating to the village, where they might have defended themselves, the invaders, on the first cry of alarm, took to flight; while their nimble enemies pressing from behind, and outrunning them along the hills, poured incessant volleys upon their disordered ranks. About 1200 were killed; and the whole body might

have been annihilated had the Wahabees instantly pushed over the mountains, instead of contenting themselves with seizing the baggage and artillery.

Under such disastrous circumstances Toussoun did not forfeit his reputation for bravery. With tears gushing from his eyes, he was heard to exclaim to his flying squadrons, "Will none of you stand by me?" and after vainly endeavouring to rally his troops, he hastened to the rear with only two horsemen of his own suite, and plunged into the midst of the enemy, to make them desist from the pursuit. Having set fire to his camp at Bedr, and left his military chest, which he had not the means to remove, he embarked at the nearest port, where some of his ships lay at anchor, and proceeded to Yembo, where in a few days he was joined by the wreck of his army. These losses completely disheartened the troops; the Bedouins deserted, Saleh Aga and Omar Aga declared they would no longer fight in Hejaz, and were sent back to Cairo. The Wahabees scourged the country to the shores of the Red Sea, being joined by the Sheriff Ghaleb in person.

When the intelligence of this failure was known to Ali Pasha he lost no time in preparing for a new expedition. Fresh reinforcements of men and ammunition daily arrived; while large sums of money were sent for distribution among the Bedouin sheiks; by which means a considerable number of them were detached from the interest of Saoud. In October 1812, Toussoun thought himself sufficiently strong to make a second attempt upon Medina. The gold of Egypt had opened the dangerous pass of Jedeida; and the Turkish army arrived without opposition under the walls of the city of the Pro-

phet. The town and castle were occupied by a Wahabee garrison, well supplied with provisions for a long siege; but the chief and his soldiers were so elated with their former success, and so confident in the strength of their fortress, that they seemed to have abandoned themselves to a state of the most culpable inactivity. Ahmed Aga, an officer of acknowledged bravery, but whose idle boasting had procured him the surname of Bonaparte, entered the suburbs with little resistance, and drove the enemy into the inner town. As the Turks had nothing but light fieldpieces to batter the wall, the siege was protracted to fourteen or fifteen days. At length a mine was laid, and while the inhabitants were engaged in their mid-day prayers, part of the fortifications was blown up, and the Arnauts marched into the city. The Wahabees fled in surprise towards the castle: above 1000 of them were butchered in the streets, and about 1500 sought refuge in the citadel, which, from its situation, might have set the Egyptian artillery at defiance. The place was instantly plundered; and after standing out for three weeks, the garrison, finding their provisions exhausted, were forced to capitulate,—Ahmed Bonaparte having promised to grant them a safe conduct, and provide camels for carrying the baggage of such as wished to return to Nejed. These stipulations, however, were shamefully violated. Only fifty camels instead of 300 were procured, which obliged the emigrants to leave behind them the greater part of their effects; and no sooner had they quitted the precincts of the town, than the Turkish soldiers pursued, stopped, and slaughtered as many of them as they could overtake. In the



true style of Tartar barbarity, Ahmed collected the skulls of all the Wahabees killed at Medina, and constructed them into a kind of tower on the high road to Yembo.

Among the soldiers in the pasha's army who signalized their bravery at the siege of Medina was a young Scotchman about twenty years of age, a native of Edinburgh, named Thomas Keith. He had served as a gunsmith in the 72d Highlanders, during the English expedition into Egypt, where he was taken prisoner, and purchased from a common soldier by Ahmed Bonaparte, in whose service he changed his religion and became a Mussulman. A favourite Sicilian Mamlouk of his master having offered him some insult, the indignant Scotchman drew his sword; blows ensued, and the aggressor fell. To escape the consequences, Keith, who now bore the name of Ibrahim Aga, implored the protection of Mohammed Ali's lady, who befriended him, and recommended him to her son, Toussoun Bey. Here again, on account of some trifling neglect of duty, he incurred the displeasure of his master, who gave orders that he should be put to death. His room was beset with slaves, ready to execute the capricious mandate of the prince; but the brave fellow defended the entrance with his sword for half an hour against the assailants, and then threw himself out of the window, and escaped to his kind protectress. Toussoun was soon reconciled; and being sensible of Ibrahim's merit and approved courage, he made him chief of his Mamlouks. Keith was one of the two horsemen that stood by the young prince at the pass of Jedeida, on which occasion he was promoted to the office of treasurer,—the second in rank

at the court of a pasha. At Medina he fought with equal courage, being the first man that mounted the breach, and after distinguishing himself on several other occasions, he was made governor of that city in April 1815.

The success of the expedition in northern Hejaz encouraged Ali Pasha to despatch another of 1000 horse and 500 foot against Jidda and Mecca, under the command of his brother-in-law Mustapha Bey. The Sheriff Ghaleb, intimidated by the fall of Medina, had renewed his offers to the Turks, and sent messengers inviting their chief to enter the town under his charge. Thus deserted by his relation, Medaifa, who commanded the Wahabee forces in that district, found himself too weak to hazard a battle, and retired towards Taïf. Jidda was seized by a detachment of a few hundred men, while Mustapha, with the principal corps, entered Mecca in January 1813. The property of the citizens was respected, as it had formerly been by the soldiers of Saoud; while 1000 Arabs and black slaves, with the sheriff at their head, were added to the ranks of the Egyptian army. Taïf immediately fell, and its brave defender, Medaifa, was soon after seized by the partisans of Ghaleb, and despatched to Constantinople, where the youngest son of Mohammed Ali presented him to his sovereign, with the keys of the holy cities, together with many valuable offerings. The noble captive was immediately beheaded; and thus the Reformers lost their most active and intrepid ally in Hejaz.

The recovery of this province opened a free passage for the haj-caravans, which had been interrupted for several years; but it had not broken the

power of the Wahabees. All the tribes eastward of the mountains that bound the great desert parallel with the sea, still acknowledged the supremacy of Saoud. The Turks never encountered them in the open country without being defeated; and as the conduct of Ghaleb was by no means such as to inspire his new allies with confidence, Mohammed Ali thought it necessary to visit in person the scene of action, that he might establish his authority on a more secure and permanent footing. Egypt had long been in a state of complete subjection; so that he could allege no excuse to the Porte for disobedience to its peremptory commands. He embarked at Suez with 2000 infantry, while an equal number of cavalry, accompanied by a train of 8000 camels, proceeded by land. Of the latter only five hundred survived, the rest having perished on the road owing to the scarcity of herbage. On his arrival at Mecca he ingratiated himself with the inhabitants, by distributing presents and ordering the mosques to be repaired. His first interviews with Ghaleb were on friendly terms, but he soon became cool in his demonstrations of amity. Although both had sworn on the Koran never to attempt any thing contrary to the interest, safety, or life of each other, these vows were not considered binding longer than it was convenient to keep them. Both were equally suspicious, and accused each other of insidious machinations. It now became the principal object of the Egyptian pasha to arrest and imprison his rival;—an enterprise of no small difficulty, considering the sheriff's influence over the neighbouring Arabs, and the strength of the castle where he resided, which was well supplied with provisions, and defended by

a garrison of 800 men. This feat was at length accomplished by a stratagem ; Ghaleb was seized, while paying a visit of ceremony to Tousoun, by a detachment of soldiers, who lay concealed in the apartments adjoining the court-yard of the house which he had just entered. After a short captivity at Mecca, he was conveyed by way of Cosseir to Cairo, where he was joined by his wives and a retinue of eunuchs and slaves ; but he died of the plague in the summer of 1816 at Salonica, the place which the Porte had assigned for his residence. The fate of this chief spread terror among all his partisans, and caused a revolution in the whole political affairs of the country. Yahia, a distant relation of his and formerly an antagonist, was appointed governor of the city, with a monthly stipend from the pasha.

Among the hostile tribes near Mecca, none had displayed a more resolute opposition than the Begoum Arabs who inhabited Taraba, where most of Ghaleb's troops had taken refuge ; and which thus became a point of union for all the southern Wahabees, as Deraiah was of the northern. Their leader at this time was a widow, named Ghalia, whose husband had been one of the principal men of the place. She was possessed of great wealth, which was distributed liberally among all the poor of the tribe who were willing to fight against the Turks. The Egyptian soldiers entertained the most absurd notion of her powers as a sorceress, and believed that she had the faculty, by means of certain personal favours, of rendering the Wahabee chiefs invincible.

In the beginning of November 1813, Tousoun was despatched from Taif with 2000 men, and on his reaching Taraba the troops were immediately

ordered to attack the place. The Arabs defended their walls with great spirit, being animated by the presence and exhortations of the heroic widow. The assailants were easily repulsed; and next day they commenced their retreat, closely pressed by the Bedouins, who harassed them so severely that they were obliged to abandon their baggage, tents, arms, and provisions. Upwards of 700 men were slaughtered in the flight; many more died of hunger and thirst; and the whole must have been annihilated but for the intrepidity of the celebrated Thomas Keith, who with a handful of horsemen retook a piece of artillery, which he pointed so well that he gave the fugitives time to cross the defile before the enemy could advance. After a variety of hardships and hairbreadth escapes, Toussoun arrived at Taïf with the wreck of his army; and for eighteen months all hostile operations in the field were suspended.

As Ali had seen every expedition into the interior fail, except that against Medina, a naval armament, accompanied by 1500 soldiers and numerous transports with provisions, under the command of Hossein Aga and Zaim Oglu, was fitted out at Jidda, and directed to make an attack on Gonfode, which for five years had been in the possession of the Sheik Tami, chief of the Azir Arabs and successor of Abu Nockta. The town, which was without a natural supply of water and defended only by a small garrison, was taken in March 1814; not, however, without a brave defence and a great expense of blood. The walls and bastions, being composed of earth or unbaked bricks, yielded to the cannon-balls, which sunk into them without de-

stroying them. From the smallness of the space, and the close contact of the parties, the scene of carnage within became dreadful in the extreme. Not only the swords and knives, but even the teeth and nails of the combatants were made use of in their fury; several of the besiegers were killed, or rather torn to pieces, in this horrid encounter; while not one who had been engaged on the other side was left alive. The brutal Zaim, exasperated at their obstinacy, published a reward of 200 piastres (£3, 6s. 8d.) for every Arab head, or pair of ears, that should be brought to him by his troops. The Arnaout soldiers, naturally greedy, dispersed themselves in every direction to reap their bloody harvest, dragging their wretched victims from their lurking-holes, some of whom consented to save their lives at the expense of mutilation. The Turks having got possession of the place, were ordered to maintain it as a military post. But their triumph was short. Early in May they were surprised by the descent of a corps of 8000 or 10,000 Wahabees, under the personal command of Tami. Their appearance spread general consternation; the Arnaout guard at the well were cut to pieces; and the panic-struck commander with most of the troops fled to the ships that lay in the harbour. The invaders entered the town, where they put all that could be found to the sword; and such was their eagerness in pursuit, that they swam after the fugitives, and actually killed numbers of them in the water under the guns of the vessels.

These repeated disasters greatly displeased, but they did not discourage Ali Pasha, who had now established his headquarters at Taif. Zaim Oglu was appointed governor of Jidda; and Tousoun,

who by his inconsiderate attack on Taraba had incurred his father's displeasure, remained stationed at Mecca. At this time the state of Turkish affairs in Hejaz did not by any means promise a favourable issue to the contest. The certain death that awaited all prisoners rendered the very name of Wahabee a terror among the pasha's troops. The arrears of pay for two or three months, and the extreme dearth of provisions, which had risen to such a height that a soldier could barely afford to purchase a subsistence of bread and onions (his only food), spread considerable discontent in the army.

Under these circumstances Ali was perhaps the only individual of his own court or army that did not despair of ultimate success. Relying on the powerful auxiliaries of money and patience, he had, since his residence at Taïf, endeavoured to reopen a friendly intercourse with the Bedouins; and in this he partially succeeded. The profusion with which he scattered dollars around him was felt in the heart of the Wahabee host; and although the attachment thus procured was perhaps not very sincere, yet numbers affected to be so, and at least remained neuter that they might partake of his bounty. His policy towards the inhabitants of Hejaz was equally conciliatory. He abolished or diminished the customs on various articles, particularly coffee; he gave liberal donations to the holy places; and even performed at the Kaaba, the tedious and absurd ceremonies of the Moslem ritual. \*

At this important crisis an irreparable misfortune befell the Wahabees in the death of Saoud, who expired of a fever at Derâiah in April 1814, at the age of sixty-eight. In him they lost an indefatigable

leader, possessing all the talents necessary for the eminent situation which he held. Victory never abandoned his colours while he was at the head of his troops; and to his loss may be attributed the disasters which soon after befell his nation. His last words, it is said, were addressed to his eldest son and successor, Abdallah, advising him never to engage the Turks in open plains;—a principle which, if strictly followed, would have ensured in all probability the recovery of Hejaz.

Abdallah had been trained to arms from infancy, and it is recorded of him, that at the early age of five years he could gallop his mare. He was even more distinguished for courage than his father, as he made it a constant rule to fight every where in person. His mental qualities were considered to be of the first order, and so long as Saoud filled the throne he occupied the second place in his dominions; none of his other brothers being allowed to exercise any influence in public affairs. With all his superior reputation for bravery and skill in war, however, he knew not so well as his predecessor how to manage the political interests of the tribes under his command, whose general strength was now weakened by the quarrels of the great sheiks; while the measures which he adopted in opposing Mohammed Ali seemed to prove that he by no means possessed the wisdom and sagacity of his father.

The prospects of the Turks began to assume a brighter aspect. Their army had been strengthened by various reinforcements: 20,000 men were now at the command of the viceroy, and distributed over different parts of the country. At Mecca 350 were stationed under Ibrahim Aga and the Sheriff Yabia;



between 300 and 400 were at Medina, where Divan Effendi had the command; 300 formed the garrison of Yembo and Jidda. The remainder were either with Ali himself, or with Hassan Pasha and his brother Abdin Bey, acting as the advanced posts of the army to the southward of Taïf. Four hundred Bedouin soldiers were placed under the charge of Sheriff Rajah, a relation of Ghaleb and a distinguished leader of the Wahabees in Hejaz, who had been won over to the side of the enemy.

One obstacle alone retarded the immediate adoption of offensive measures. The campaign had proved most destructive to the Egyptian camels: hundreds of their dead bodies strewed the roads between Jidda and Taïf, and occasioned such a pestilential stench that the inhabitants were obliged to consume them to ashes with dry grass from the adjoining mountains. At a moderate calculation, during the three years of the war, 30,000 of these animals belonging to the army had perished in Hejaz. The arrival of the pilgrim-caravans in November brought a reinforcement of 6000 or 7000, chiefly of the Syrian breed, which were better adapted than the others for military purposes.

While these measures were in preparation the Wahabees had made frequent incursions towards Taïf, and against the tribes which had espoused the cause of the pasha. To intercept the communication between Jidda and Mecca they attacked the camp at Bahra, which they pillaged of its baggage, carrying off a small caravan and massacring all the inhabitants they could find. The pride of the Turks was still farther humbled by another defeat. Abdin Bey with his Arnaouts, who occupied certain

districts in the province of Tehama, had laid desolate the country to the extent of forty miles, that by means of this artificial desert he might prevent the sudden incursions of the enemy. Notwithstanding these cruel precautions, the Sheik Bakrouj, at the head of his Arabs and a strong detachment from Tami, stole by surprise into the Turkish camp at Barush about daybreak, and fell upon the sleeping soldiers, of whom they slaughtered 800 besides 80 horsemen. Bakrouj pursued the fugitives during two days; and not an individual would have escaped destruction had not Hossein Bey with a troop of cavalry covered their retreat. Such of them as fell alive into the hands of the pursuers were cruelly mutilated, by having their arms and legs cut off, and then left to perish in that horrid condition.

The whole effective strength of the Egyptian army, reinforced by 800 horsemen of Libyan Bedouins from Cairo, was now collected near Taïf; and from the state of his storehouses and the number of his camps, Mohammed Ali considered his success no longer doubtful. He resolved to place himself at their head, and to take the command in person of the next expedition, which was directed against Taraba, in revenge for the disgrace and losses that had been sustained there by his favourite son. A well-appointed artillery, consisting of twelve fieldpieces,—500 axes for cutting down the palm-groves near the town,—a company of masons and carpenters for the purpose of opening a mine to blow it up at once,—encouraged the soldiers to believe that the walls of Taraba could not long remain standing. To crown the work of desolation, a load of water-melon seeds was brought from Wady Fatima, and paraded through

the ranks, indicating his intention of sowing them on the spot which the devoted place still occupied. The Wahabees were nothing daunted at these pompous demonstrations. Confident in the strength of his position, Bakrouj wrote a sneering epistle to Ali, advising him to return to Egypt, or provide better troops if he meant to fight with him.

In January 1815, the pasha, with all the forces and camels he could muster, left Mecca and proceeded towards Kolach, where Hassan Pasha, Achmed Bonaparte, Topouz Oglu, Sheriff Rajah, and other chiefs, were already assembled; and where sufficient provisions had been collected for fifty or sixty days. While here, information was brought that the enemy had seized upon Bissel, a strong position in their rear, which would enable them to interrupt the communication between Kolach and Taïf. Bissel is a level spot of ground encircled by a natural rampart of hills, through which are several narrow passes or entrances. On these eminences the Wahabees were posted, while the area within contained their stores and ammunition, besides a great quantity of private property. Their whole force was reckoned about 25,000 infantry, accompanied by 5000 camels; but they had few cavalry, and were entirely destitute of artillery. Among the distinguished leaders of this army were Faisal, brother of Abdallah, the renowned heroine Ghalia, the Sheik Tami, with all the chiefs of the Yemen mountains, and some whose dwellings were as far eastward as the borders of Hadramaut.

When the pasha's cavalry approached they wisely remained on their hills, and repulsed with some loss an attack made on a valley where the Turks wished

to plant one of their fieldpieces. A whole day was consumed in fruitless attempts; and such was the terror inflicted by the lances of the Wahabees, that numbers deserted the ranks and fled to Mecca, where they spread the alarming news of the pasha's death, and the total defeat of the expedition. Finding he could have no chance of success so long as the enemy kept the mountains, the policy of Ali was to decoy them into the plain. He sent during the night for reinforcements from Kolach, and early next morning renewed the assault; commanding the officers to advance with their columns closer to the enemy's position, and after the first fire to retreat in seeming disorder. The stratagem had the desired effect. The Arabs, seeing their adversaries fly, thought they were panic-struck, and that the fortunate moment for completely crushing them had arrived. They imprudently abandoned the steeps and gave chase over the plain; and when they had advanced to a sufficient distance from their strongholds the pasha wheeled round with his cavalry, outflanked the pursuers, and after a hot engagement of five hours gained a decisive victory.

In this action the pasha fought in person at the moment when he ordered his cavalry to wheel and repel their pursuers. In order to keep alive the spirit of resistance he dismounted, commanded his carpet to be spread on a little level spot in presence of the whole line, and seating himself upon it, he called for his pipe, declaring that from that ground he would not move, but there await victory or death as fate might determine. A reward of six dollars was proclaimed to every soldier who should present him with the head of an enemy; and in a

few hours 5000 of these ghastly trophies were piled up before him. Mere courage was all the Wahabees had to oppose to military skill and experience ; and this noble quality did not forsake them to the last, for even in the most desperate condition they maintained the fight during a considerable time. The Turkish infantry at length turned their position ; when Sheriff Rajah, who had just arrived with his corps, like another Blucher fell upon their rear, and compelled them to fly in the utmost disorder. He beset the narrow valley through which they attempted to retreat, and here 1500 of them were surrounded and cut to pieces.

The slaughter was prodigious, the whole field being strewed over with headless bodies ; for there were few of the mercenary Turks who did not claim and receive the recompense promised them by their commander-in-chief. About 300 were taken alive at the express desire of Ali, who ordered his troops to offer them quarter, as very few of the Arabs had condescended to beg for mercy. A body still remained on the heights with a view to guard the baggage ; they stood their ground with desperate bravery, but their position was at length carried, and not a man left alive. Tami fled with only a very few followers, as did also Faisal and Ghailia. The escape of this Amazon was a disappointment to Ali, who was anxious to send her as a trophy to Constantinople ; but no proposals could induce her to desert the Bedouins, or confide in the offers of the Turks. The whole camp of the Wahabees,—their provisions, ammunition, camels, women, and all that belonged to them,—became the prey of the victors. The tent of Faisal, which contained

about 2000 dollars (£437), was bestowed on Rajah, who had especially distinguished himself. Mounted on a famous mare, he had galloped far in advance of the lines through the enemy's ranks, and striking his lance into the ground immediately before the door of the tent, he defended himself with his sword until he was rescued by the approach of his friends. The loss of the Turks was reckoned only between 400 and 500 men, chiefly owing to the skilful dispositions of the pasha. Individual instances are recorded of the most romantic valour among the Arabs. Bakrouj killed two of the pasha's officers with his own hand; and when his mare was shot under him he fought on foot among the Turkish cavalry until he found an opportunity of pulling a trooper from his horse, which he instantly mounted, and, by this means escaped. Ibn Shokban, chief of Beishe, with a few hundred men, cut his way through the whole body of the enemy's infantry. Numerous parties of the Azir Arabs had sworn by the oath of divorce not to fly, but if possible to return to their families victorious. After the battle whole ranks of them were found lying dead upon the hills, tied together by the legs with ropes. Having fought as long as their ammunition lasted, they had resolved to perish to the last man rather than disgrace their tribe by running away.

Tidings of this important victory were immediately despatched to Constantinople and Cairo. Elated with success the Turks resumed their national fierceness and insolence, which had in some degree been checked. Ali stained his laurels with the most revolting cruelties. The 300 prisoners to whom he had promised quarter fell by the hand of

the executioner. Fifty of them were impaled alive before the gates of Mecca; twelve suffered a like horrible death at the halting-places on the road to Jidda; and the rest under the walls of that town. Their carcasses were allowed to remain until the dogs and vultures devoured them.

Without suffering the ardour of his troops to cool, the pasha directed his march on Taraba, where he arrived within four days after the battle. Faisal fled at his approach; and the deserted inhabitants, who consisted chiefly of old men, women, and children, were glad to capitulate and beg for protection. A panic had seized the whole country, and the Turkish army met not the slightest opposition. As the strength of the enemy lay in the southern countries, Ali resolved to follow them into their own territories, and if possible to exterminate their party.

Several of the chiefs and fugitives who had made their escape from Bissel posted themselves at Beishe, a fertile country eastward of the Yemen mountains. Here they had assembled to a considerable number, and seemed determined to maintain a very obstinate resistance,—having defended themselves by a line of mud-fortifications, pierced every where with loopholes for the discharge of fire-arms. A cannonade was kept up without effect for two days, when a discharge of shells put an end to the contest. One of these having exploded set fire to some combustibles, which communicating to all the dry woodwork and thatching of reed and palm-branches in the interior, had the effect of spreading almost immediately into one general blaze;—the heat and smoke of which became intolerable even to the assailants, and soon drove out the besieged to a pre-

cipitate flight, when they were instantly pursued by the Turkish horsemen. Among those who escaped was the heroine Ghalia. Having no longer any secure place of retreat, she led her followers into the desert, and ultimately reached Deraiah. The castle of Ranniah with several others capitulated.

One formidable enemy yet remained in the field, the Sheik Tami, who was resolved to try a second battle, and had assembled a considerable army beyond the rugged mountains of Azir, twelve or fourteen days' journey westward from Beishe. Towards this district Mohammed Ali next directed his attempts. On the march his army suffered the extremities of hunger and fatigue. A hundred horses sometimes died in one day, and out of more than 10,000 camels only 300 survived the expedition. The sinking spirits of the troops were kept up by the pasha, who promised them a glorious booty in 'plundering' the towns of Yemen. Tami had collected a force of 8000 or 10,000 men at a mountain-fortress called Tor, so strong as to be deemed by the Arabs impregnable. In two days the Turkish artillery forced the Wahabees to yield, though the combat was more vigorously maintained than at Bissel. In the castle were found considerable stores of provisions, which proved most seasonable to the invading army.

Tami fled; but he was the last to quit the field. Having taken refuge in the house of a friend, he was betrayed and delivered up in chains to Sheriff Rajah, who was roaming about the mountains in search of the fugitive. Bakrouj was at the same time defeated in Zohran, and being hemmed in between two fires was taken prisoner. The two noble captives were sent to the pasha, and both suf-



ferred the death of traitors. Bakrouj was never forgiven the insulting letter which he wrote from Taraba. He maintained a sulky silence under his misfortunes. Once he made his escape on finding his guards asleep; but was retaken, after killing two men and wounding another with a poniard which he had seized. His death was accomplished with a studied cruelty,—such as might at once gratify the revenge of Ali, and furnish a barbarous entertainment to his soldiers. The prisoner with his hands bound was placed in the midst; and they were directed with their sabres to cut him slightly, that he might die as it were by inches. His torments were severe and protracted; but he expired at last without having uttered one complaint.

The fate of Tami was equally tragical. This chief is represented as a man of strong natural powers; short in stature, with a long white beard, and eyes darting fire. His conduct inspired the whole army with respect. The pasha often conversed with him for amusement; but it was like the treachery of the tiger, who sports with his prey before he seizes it in his grasp. He promised to write to the sultan in his favour, and procure him permission to live in retirement in the mountains of Roumelia; but this solemn pledge was violated. The captive sheik was sent to Cairo, where he was paraded through the streets, seated on a camel, loaded with an immense chain about his neck, and the head of Bakrouj in a bag suspended from his shoulders. From this city he was conveyed to Constantinople, where he was immediately beheaded.

After vanquishing the most renowned chiefs of the southern Wahabees, it seemed to be the eager desire

of Ali to riot in the far-famed wealth of Yemen ; and with this view he opened a correspondence with the Imam of Sanaa. But the soldiers, worn out with disease and fatigue, and considering the object of the expedition as accomplished, openly declared their wish of returning to Mecca. Instead of advancing southward Ali directed his march towards Gonfode, which surrendered without the slightest resistance. Thence he proceeded to Mecca, with a remnant of only 1500 men, moneyless and in rags, being all that remained of an army of 4000. In April, he visited Medina, where Toussoun was governor ; probably with a design to obtain information respecting the affairs of the northern Hejaz, and to concert with him measures for their future proceedings. But the state of Egypt afforded a sufficient reason for his immediate departure. Apprehensions were entertained of an attack being made on Alexandria by the captain-pasha of the grand seignior. An insurrection of the troops had also broken out at Cairo, originating in their dislike to the attempted introduction of the European system of discipline ; and when the pasha reached his capital in June 1815, after an absence of nearly two years, he found every thing in tumult and confusion.

The remainder of the Arabian war was now left in the hands of Toussoun Pasha, who, while his father was subduing the southern tribes, had conducted operations in the north against Abdallah ibn Saoud. When the news of Ali's success became known to the Arabs on the frontier of Nejed, many of their sheiks came to Medina, and made proposals to Toussoun to join him against the Wahabees, whose power they had felt more severely than others

at a greater distance. With these assurances he conceived hopes of conquering the province of Nejed and emulating his father's fame. Setting out with a small expedition of 2500 men, infantry and cavalry, he resolved to try his fortune by making an attack on Kasym. After a march of ten or eleven days he arrived at Rass, a considerable town defended by a wall. This with several other large villages gave in their submission. But here he found himself in a precarious situation; and discovered that, like most Turks, he had not sufficiently calculated his means. The light troops of the Wahabees were hovering around, and rendered his army wholly dependent on two or three villages for their daily subsistence. The road to Medina was occupied by the enemy; and it was on this occasion that the gallant Thomas Keith, while hastening with 250 horsemen to the assistance of his commander, was surrounded by a superior force, and fell at the head of his troops, who were all cut to pieces. In this action the brave Scotchman killed four of the enemy with his own hand.

In the mean time Abdallah had not neglected his duty, having likewise entered the province of Kasym with his army, and fixed his headquarters at Shenana, only five hours distant from Khabara, where Toussoun was now encamped. In this dilemma the adventurous pasha wished to terminate all suspense by a battle; but his officers and soldiers declined,—deeming it more prudent for persons in their situation to compromise than to fight; the more so, as Mohammed Ali had written to Abdallah before quitting Hejaz, exhorting him to submission, and offering terms of peace; at the same time authorizing his son to conclude the truce, if that

could be done on favourable conditions. Abdallah on his part had reasons for bringing matters to a pacific termination. He foresaw that the destruction even of Toussoun's entire force would be of little real advantage to him so long as the Turks could repair their losses from the abundant resources of Egypt. He knew also that they possessed the means of bribery ; and that some of his companions in arms were in their hearts the allies of his enemies.

Negotiations were speedily concluded ; and in ratifying the treaty Abdallah renounced all claim to the holy cities ; affected to style himself the dutiful subject of the sultan ; and obtained a free passage for the Wahabees whenever they wished to perform the pilgrimage. Toussoun restored those towns of Kasym which he held in his possession, and dismissed from his party all the sheiks of that country who had joined his standard.

The exchange of ratifications was conducted with considerable ceremony. The manifesto in which the chief of the desert acknowledged his allegiance to the Porte ran in these words :—" To TOUSSOUN.— I lie at the gate of your mercy, sire ; I ask pardon of God and your highness ; I desire to be received into the number of the faithful subjects of the sultan ; and from this day hence we shall obey his orders, in making prayers for his august person every Friday in our mosques and on the mountain-tops. Finally, on our part there shall be no attempt at rebellion." On this being read to the Wahabee army, they shouted, with one voice, " Yes, we will obey !" and instantly the air was rent with prayers for the health of the sultan and the glory of his arms. The envoy of Toussoun then invested Ab-

dallah with the emblems of his submission,—a pelisse, a sabre, and several horses richly caparisoned. “This,” said he, in presenting him with the sword, “is the pledge of your fealty; it will be your protector so long as you are faithful to your promises; but if you disobey the orders of the sultan, our master, it will be his avenger.” Again the whole camp resounded with shouts for the prosperity of the grand seignior, and promised to repeat his name in their Friday’s prayers.

Toussoun quitted Arabia in the beginning of November. At Cairo he was welcomed with all the honours due to his rank and bravery. Salvos of artillery announced his approach, and crowds thronged the streets to behold the deliverer of the holy cities. By his father alone he was coldly received. His subsequent history is short: he was appointed to command a large body of troops encamped at Rosetta for the defence of the coast, and died there next year (September 1816) of the plague.

Mohammed Ali was evidently not sincere in his offers of peace; and pretexts were easily found for renewing hostilities. His letters of acquiescence to Abdallah were extremely ambiguous. He demanded the restitution of the treasures which his father had taken from the tomb of the Prophet; he required that Derajah should submit to the jurisdiction of the Governor of Medina; and he refused to confirm the treaty, unless the Wahabees would cede to him the province of Hasa. Deceit was one of the most prominent and reprehensible features in the character of Ali; and although his son, his equal in rank (both being pashas of three tails), had concluded a peace that was considered

binding on his whole party, he represented matters under a different point of view at Constantinople. As he had pledged himself to annihilate the heretics by destroying their capital, he found it necessary to persuade the sultan that he had not yet abandoned that object; the treaty agreed to by Toussoun being only a temporary armistice.

It now became manifest to Abdallah, either that the young prince had deceived him, or that the father, by his extravagant demands, had given a fresh proof of the contempt in which he held all engagements. He summoned a council of his kinsmen and principal officers, and their opinion was, that they had no alternative but arms, if they wished to preserve their religion and their independence. Defensive preparations were every where made; stores of provisions and ammunition were thrown into the cities and fortresses; the sheiks were obliged to renew their oaths of fidelity; the imams in the pulpits discoursed of war and the treachery of the Turks. Thirty thousand troops were raised, and the command assigned to officers whose talents and courage had been tried in the preceding campaigns. The rich sold their property to pay the army and purchase the necessary supplies. All were animated with the most patriotic enthusiasm: "God," said they, "will give us, who profess his unity, the victory over those who admit a plurality." Abdallah visited the provinces in person, and obtained reinforcements from Bahrein and Hassa; some tribes from Oman joined his standard, and the Arabs of Yemen sent him 2000 combatants.

The pasha on his side had displayed equal activity. When the alarm of invasion and revolt in

Egypt had subsided, he ordered a powerful expedition to be fitted out for Hejaz, which he intrusted to the command of his adopted son Ibrahim, a prince of eminent bravery, and who had already distinguished himself in suppressing the mutinous Mamlouks. Six months were devoted to the transport of military stores. In September 1816, the general left Cairo. He was accompanied by about 2000 infantry, who went by Cosseir to Yembo, and 1500 Libyan Bedouin horsemen, who proceeded by land. In his train were some French officers, and the Arab hero Sheik Rajah, who had been sent to Egypt in chains, but was now released, as his services might prove useful to the expedition. His orders were to attack Deraiah, by way of Medina and Kasym. In ten days after his landing he reached the city of the Prophet. Here he took a vow never to sheath his sword, nor to drink wine or other forbidden liquor, until he had entirely extirpated the enemies of his religion. Following the route of Toussoun, he took up his position at Hena-kiah, where several weeks were spent in skirmishing and plundering. Some of the neighbouring chiefs joined his ranks, among whom was Ghanem, sheik of the Harbs; who brought over 500 of his tribe. Nothing could have been more seasonable than such reinforcements, as his troops were suffering from epidemic diseases and the harassing warfare of the desert; for the Arabs found means to steal at night into the Turkish camp, where they killed or cut the legs of their horses and camels.

Abdallah was encamped in the vicinity of Aenezeh. He had conceived the bold project of marching directly on Medina, at the head of 30,000 men; while

his brother Faisal should make a descent on Mecca, Jidda, and Yembo, and thus intercept the convoys of troops and provisions from Egypt. From this enterprise he was diverted by the revolt of some of his allies, and the defeat of a body of 10,000 troops, which he commanded in person. The town of Rass was the first that offered any serious obstacle to the advance of Ibrahim. It was strongly fortified, and the inhabitants exerted themselves with signal courage. The women in the garrison assisted their brave defenders, and the besiegers were repulsed at all points. Already 3000 Turks had fallen, and the mortality daily increased. Hundreds of the heads of the slaughtered Wahabees were exposed to the view of the inhabitants, in the hope that this hideous spectacle might terrify them into a surrender; but it only increased their desire of revenge.

In this perilous situation, and reduced to extreme distress, Ibrahim was compelled to raise the siege, after wasting three months and seventeen days in useless efforts. This, however, was the only reverse which he experienced. As if the fortunes of his father had suddenly returned, he advanced from victory to victory, and in the blood of the heeticks speedily washed out the affront which his arms had received under the walls of Rass. Khabara surrendered after a cannonade of a few hours. Aenezeh followed the example; the greater part of the troops having fled, without waiting to obtain articles of capitulation.\* All the towns and tribes of Kasym had now submitted to the Turks; Abdallah retired from place to place before the invaders, and saw all his strongholds fall into their hands. Boureidah, Shakara, and Dorama, were successively invested;



taken possession of, and demolished by the enemy. Shakara was a handsome commercial town, and reckoned the strongest fortress in the country. The obstinacy which the Turks had experienced at Dorama led to a cruel retaliation. All the inhabitants were put to the sword; the soldiers had orders to fire upon them in their houses; and in two hours the work of indiscriminate carnage was completed.

Nothing now remained to consummate the triumph of Ibrahim but the capture of Deraiah. With a force nearly 6000 strong he directed his march towards that capital, which he reached on the 6th of April. The place was immediately invested, redoubts were constructed, intrenchments thrown up, and every preparation made for a resolute siege. This city, famous as the metropolis of Nejed and the seat of the power and government of the Wahabees, lies about 400 miles eastward of Medina in a fertile valley called Wady Hanifa, rich in fruits and grain, and watered by a stream (El Baten) which, though dry in summer, in the rainy season runs a course of considerable extent. Its position is naturally strong, the mountains enclosing it on either hand; and the only entrances to the valley being through two inlets, of which that on the west side is so narrow as to admit but of one camel at a time, and might easily be defended against any number of assailants. Though formerly a place of some note, its true situation and importance were now for the first time known to Europeans. The town was composed of five small villages or quarters, each surrounded by a wall fortified with bastions. The suburbs were unprotected, and covered with gardens and fruit-trees. The houses were chiefly of stone

or brick, and the bazaars consisted of shops made of reeds, which could easily be transported from one place to another. There were twenty-eight mosques in it and thirty colleges, but no baths, khans, or public inns. The inhabitants, proverbial for their hospitality, were estimated at 13,000.

Five months were consumed in the siege of this important capital ; both parties maintaining the contest with undaunted resolution, and with alternate advantages. Abdallah did his utmost by word and action to animate his troops ; money and presents were lavishly distributed ; and the women braved the fire of the besiegers to fetch water to the wounded. Ibrahim meanwhile made little progress, and the accidental explosion of a magazine threatened to defeat entirely the object of the expedition. More than 200 barrels of gunpowder and as many loaded shells blew up in the midst of his camp ; thus leaving him almost destitute of ammunition, and surrounded with enemies in the heart of a desert 500 leagues from Egypt. No resource remained for the Turks but their courage and their sabres until fresh supplies were obtained from Medina and the neighbouring garrisons. The governors of Bagdad and Bussora sent large caravans with provisions, while recruits with ammunition and artillery-stores arrived in successive detachments from Cairo. The combat was renewed ; and to inspirit the languid soldier fifty piastres were promised for every head or pair of ears he should bring to his commander.

Abdallah now found that his capital could no longer be defended. All his sorties had been attended with loss ; two of his sons were taken prisoners, and one of them put to death. The fortresses on the

adjoining heights, in the gardens, and on the banks of the dry bed of the river, had fallen into the hands of the assailants. Three of the five quarters of the city made a conditional surrender, and the rest were cut off from communicating with the villages that supplied them with provisions. In this forlorn position, Abdallah, with his guard of 400 black slaves, still maintained a brave resistance in his palace, determined to sacrifice his life on the ruins of his expiring country ; but he was at length compelled by the impatient clamours of the citizens to hoist a flag of truce and demand a conference, which was immediately granted. With a retinue of 200 men he repaired to the tent of Ibrahim and offered terms of surrender, which the pasha consented to accept ; at the same time acquainting him, that in compliance with the order of his father the Wahabee chief must immediately take his departure for Egypt. The condition was alarming ; but it seemed to be the only means of averting a more tragical catastrophe, and the generous Abdallah accepted it.

Trusting to the hopes of security expressed by the conqueror, and that his family and capital would be saved from destruction, in token of which he had received a white handkerchief, the emblem of peace, he quitted his palace amidst the tears and regrets of his friends, crossed the desert with a small train of attendants, and was received at Cairo by the viceroy with every outward demonstration of respect. After a short conference he was despatched to Constantinople under an escort of Tartars. The partisans of Ali give him the credit of interposing with the sultan to pardon the obnoxious captive ; for such was now the situation of the too credulous Ab-



Abdallah Ibn Saoud, Chief of the Wahabees.

dallah. But the Ottoman divan were implacable. Mercy is no attribute either of the religion or the policy of the Turks; and, after being paraded over the city for three days, the unhappy chief, with his two companions in misfortune, his secretary and treasurer, were beheaded (December 19, 1818) in the public square of St Sophia. The pasha and his son

were complimented on their victories by the Sublime Porte, and honoured with several costly presents.

The fall of the Wahabee capital may be said to have completed the conquest of Nejed. The province of Haryk was reduced after a slight resistance. Other districts sent deputies offering voluntary submission. The want of sufficient provisions, rendered more severe by the destructive operations of the siege, occasioned a very general mutiny in the Turkish army. The soldiers committed all sorts of excess, plundering the houses and pillaging the country. Ibrahim himself narrowly escaped assassination ; but his well-timed intrepidity, and the decapitation of some of the insurgent chiefs, had the effect of restoring order. One of the Arab sheiks was punished by having his teeth drawn, and another was blown from the mouth of a cannon.

The news of Abdallah's death spread universal grief among the inhabitants of Deraiah ; and their consternation was increased when the orders of Ali were communicated, that the place must be rased to the ground, and the whole family of their chief sent captives to Egypt. A group of 500 exiles, including several of the brothers, uncles, and sons of Abdallah, were transported to Cairo, where small pensions were assigned them. As it became desirable to evacuate the place, an epidemic, the consequence of fatigues and privations of all kinds, having begun to commit the most frightful ravages, the work of demolition was enjoined without delay. The date-trees in the gardens and suburbs were cut down ; and the soldiers set fire to the houses the moment the inmates had made their escape, many of whom clung affectionately to their homes until they were nearly buried in the ruins.

As the season of the year was at the hottest, and disease and devastation doing their work at the same time, the spectacle was truly afflicting. In the space of twenty days Deraiah was completely unpeopled, and not one stone left upon another.

Before quitting the scene of devastation, Ibrahim traversed the country to ascertain that the exterminatory decree had been executed against all the fortresses that might serve as future strongholds or rallying-points for the heretics. This done, he repaired to Medina, having already despatched the artillery and part of the troops to that place. Here and at Mecca he returned thanks to the Prophet for this signal triumph over his enemies; after which he departed with the sickly and exhausted remains of his army for Egypt.

The disturbances which had broken out in the south of Hejaz were suppressed by Halil Pasha, who had been sent with a reinforcement to Deraiah; but on finding that the place had surrendered he directed his march on Abu-Arish, of which he took possession; and in reward for his services was made governor of Mecca. It was at this time that the British authorities in India, in consequence of the depredations committed by the Wahabees on the commerce of the Persian Gulf, made proposals to Ibrahim, through Captain Sadlier, to co-operate with the Egyptian army by sending an expedition against El Katif, which might produce a diversion in favour of the Turks; but, as the campaign had already been brought to a favourable conclusion, the aid of an English fleet was declined as unnecessary.

It may appear surprising that a power so widely extended, and so firmly established as that of the Wahabees, should have been so rapidly overthrown.

Saoud had not only laid the foundation, but organized the political system of a great empire. He would have made himself master of all Arabia had not death arrested him in the midst of his conquests. Bagdad and Bussora would have opened their gates to him; Syria and Egypt, torn by jarring factions and weakened by revolution, might again have fallen an easy prey to the hordes of the desert.

Such was the splendid legacy which he bequeathed to his successor; and never, perhaps, had any prince greater facilities for securing the independence of his nation than Abdallah. But, unfortunately, he inherited not the qualities necessary for following up the brilliant career which his father had pointed out to him. He was brave; but courage is not the only virtue essential to a sovereign. His inflexible severity alienated the affections of his people; and his want of military tact was evinced in the numerous errors he committed in the progress of the war. Had he known to profit by his advantages, he might have annihilated the Ottoman army, exhausted with disease and fatigue in the midst of burning sands, instead of being compelled to sue for a dishonourable and fatal peace. The desertion of the Bedouins no doubt weakened his power, which may be said to have yielded to the gold of Ali rather than to the valour of his troops. But the influence of a popular chief could have prevented or counteracted these seductions; and had the hardy tribes of the desert found such a prince in Abdallah, the carcasses of the Turks might have fed the eagles, and the fate of Arabia been entirely changed.

Some writers lament the suppression of the Wahabees, from a belief that the downfall of Islam was

to follow the propagation of their doctrines, and that a purer religion would be established in its stead. These regrets appear to be inspired by erroneous conceptions of the principles of this sect, which are nothing else than the gross and primitive superstitions of the 'Koran enforced with greater rigour. Their creed was even more sanguinary and intolerant than that which the first followers of Mohammed offered to the nations on the points of their swords. Their reform extended only to a few absurd or scandalous practices, and the more strict injunction of certain moral precepts ; but they left untouched all the impious and heretical dogmas of the Moslem faith. Their chief merit consisted not in their teaching their countrymen a more refined and rational theology, but in suppressing their infidel indifference to all religion ; in improving their political condition ; and in subjecting their wild passions to the restraint of law and justice.\*

---

\* It was the opinion of Burckhardt, that the suppression of the Wahabees and the conquest of Nejed are merely temporary ; and that these warlike fanatics, who are dispersed rather than subdued, will take the earliest opportunity to effect the restoration of their empire. This of course must greatly depend on the character of the future pashas of Egypt ; but it is not likely to happen in the reign of Mohammed Ali or his son, to whom the Porte has ceded by a recent treaty (May 1833) the whole of Syria, including Tripoli, Aleppo, Damascus, and Jerusalem ; besides the command of the harbours in the Red Sea, and the sacred privilege of conducting the pilgrim-caravans. Ibrahim, by pushing his victories in the late Syrian campaigns almost to the gates of Constantinople, has acquired fresh laurels as a conqueror, and a new title to be Sheik el Haram of Mecca. Under these circumstances the Bedouins, of whom not fewer than 5370 are now serving in the armies of the pasha, can have no immediate prospects of reasserting their independence. The successes of Ibrahim led to a serious conflict, in the month of June 1832, between the Turkish and Arab regiments stationed at Mecca. Of the former 1400 were sabred in the streets. The battery that overlooks the city was made to play upon the mosque, where the mutinous Turks had taken refuge, and with such effect, that the walls were pierced, one of the pillars broken down, and several persons killed.



## CHAPTER VIII.

*Social State of the Arabs.*

National Character of the Arabs—Their Family-pride—Orders of Nobility—Their Domestic Life—Their Tents—Furniture—Mode of Encamping—Dress—Personal Appearance—Acuteness of their Senses—Sagacity in tracing Footsteps—Their Arms—Food and Cookery—Manner of Eating—Diseases—Wealth and Industry—Marriage—Divorce—Education of their Children—Funerals—Modes of Salutation—Hospitality—Warfare—Robbery and Theft—The Blood-revenge—Amusements—Poetry and Music—Learning—Medicine—Superstitions—Language—Arts—Commerce—Proposed Steam Routes by the Euphrates and the Red Sea—Population—Concluding Reflections.

CLIMATE, government, and education, are in every country the great agents that form and modify the character of nations. Nowhere are their effects more strikingly exemplified than in Arabia. To the first of these causes may be ascribed many of the social virtues for which the natives have been always distinguished; while most of the crimes, vices, and prejudices, by which they are degraded, are the natural fruits of the two latter. On the sea-coasts and in the towns, their manners have been corrupted by commerce and a free intercourse with foreigners. Travellers, who have formed their opinions from mixing exclusively with those classes, have drawn a very unfavourable picture of the inhabitants in general, as a nation of tyrants, hypocrites, and deceivers, plunged in a lower state of ignorance and debauchery than the most barbarous islanders of the South Seas. These representations are no doubt partially true, but they are far from

being universally just. A longer residence among them and better opportunities of judging have contributed to remove many erroneous impressions as to their social and domestic habits.

No people are more remarkable than the Arabs for their spirit of nationality and family-pride. The poorest of them glory in their birth, and look with disdain on the natives of other countries. They boast of the accuracy with which they have preserved their genealogies; yet the lower, and most even of the middle classes, keep no register of their parentage, and would often be at a loss to know their fathers or grandfathers, were it not regulated by custom that the son frequently joins their names to his own. The sheiks and sheriffs are the true aristocracy of Arabia; and these have reason to be vain of their ancestry, which some of them can trace in regular descent from the days of Mohamméd or Moses. The oldest nobility in Europe are but of yesterday compared to these petty princes of the desert.

Though the title of sheik is the most ancient and most common in use among the Arabian grandees, the sheriffs, being the descendants of Mohammed, hold the first rank in point of dignity. This has arisen doubtless from the singular veneration in which the family of the Prophet is held, and it has entailed on his posterity the double honour that always attaches to splendid descent and superior sanctity. The sheriffs are very numerous, and multiplied over all Mohammedan countries. Whole villages are peopled with them; and they are frequently found in the lowest state of misery. Still their presence commands universal respect; in a fray no arm would violate their person,—their character is held sacred, and furnishes a better protection for their pro-

perty against thieves than bolts or bars. The reason why these families are so numerous is, that the honour is hereditary both by male and female descent. The son of a Turk or Syrian is ennobled if his mother can reckon kindred with Fatima. To this class belong the seyeds and mollahs; but between these and the sheriffs there is this distinction, that the latter are constantly devoted to a military life, while the former engage in the pursuits of trade and science. There are, besides these, other noble families at Mecca, such as the Koreish and muftis of certain sects, who have hereditary employment about the mosque, and for the retention of which they are obliged to prove the genuineness of their pedigree.

In the domestic life of the Arabs there is little to attract the admiration of strangers. Their best houses display little exterior magnificence, and are still more deficient in point of internal accommodation. The tent forms the cherished home of the larger proportion of the inhabitants, and when they remove they transport their dwellings with them. The height of this dwelling is generally seven feet, its length from twenty-five to thirty, and its breadth about ten. It is divided into two apartments, one for the men and the other for the women; and these are separated by a white woollen carpet of Damascus manufacture drawn across, and fastened to the three middle posts.

The furniture comprises pack-saddles, as well as those for riding, large water-bags made of tanned camel-skins, goat-skins for milk and butter, the little bag into which the hair or wool is put that falls from the sheep and camels on the road, the leather bucket for drawing up water from deep wells, a copper pan, coffee-pot, mortar, hand-mill,

wooden dishes, the horse's feeding-bag, and the iron chain which fastens their forefeet while pasturing about the camp. The Arabs seldom allow their women to be seen; and when a stranger is introduced, the cry of *tarik* (or retire) warns them instantly to disappear. It is reckoned a breach of decorum to salute a lady, or even to look her steadfastly in the face.

The mode of encamping differs according to circumstances. When the tents are but few, they are pitched in a circle (*dowar*); if the number is considerable they extend in a straight line, perhaps along a rivulet, in rows three or four deep. The sheik's is always on the side where danger is apprehended or where travellers are expected;—it being his particular business to oppose the former and to honour the latter. Every chief sticks his lance into the ground in front of his tent, to which he ties his horse or camel; the pack-saddles forming the couch on which he and his guests recline. When wandering in search of water or pasture, they move in parties slowly over the sandy plain. The armed horsemen ride foremost as a reconnoitring detachment; the flocks with their young follow; behind come the beasts of burden, loaded with the women and children, tents, baggage, and provision.

The ordinary costume of the Bedouins is extremely simple, consisting of a coarse cotton shirt, over which is worn a thin, light, white woollen mantle (*kombaz*), or sometimes one of a coarser kind (the *abba*), striped white and brown. The wealthy substitute for this a long gown of silk or cotton stuff. The mantles worn by the sheiks are interwoven with gold, and may be valued at £10 sterling. The com-

mon abba is without sleeves, resembling a sack, with openings for the head and arms, and requires so little art in the making that blind tailors earn their livelihood by this employment. Public taste, however, is occasionally more capricious, especially as to the head-dress, which is often expensive, and in a hot country must be extremely inconvenient. A fashionable Arab will wear fifteen caps one above another, some of which are linen, but the greater part of thick cloth or cotton. That which covers the whole is richly embroidered with gold, and inwrought with texts or passages from the Koran. Over all there is wrapped a sash or large piece of muslin, with the ends hanging down, and ornamented with silk or gold fringes. This useless incumbrance is considered a mark of respect towards superiors. It is also used, as the beard was formerly in Europe, to indicate literary merit; and those who affect to be thought men of learning discover their pretensions by the size of their turbans. No part of Oriental costume is so variable as this covering for the head. Niebuhr has given illustrations of forty-eight different ways of wearing it. The Bedouins use a keffie, or square kerchief of yellow or green cotton, with two corners hanging down on each side to protect them from the sun and wind, or to conceal their features if they wish to be unknown. A few rich sheiks wear shawls striped red and white, of Damascus or Bagdad manufacture. The Aenezes and some other tribes do not use drawers, which they consider as too effeminate for a man; and they usually walk and ride barefooted, though they have a particular esteem for yellow boots and red shoes.

In Mecca and other large towns the winter-suit

of the higher classes is the *benish* or upper cloak, and the *jubbe* or under one,—both of cloth such as is worn in all parts of Turkey. The rest of their dress consists of a showy silk gown tied with a thin Cashmere sash, a white muslin turban, and yellow slippers. In summer the *benish* is composed of a very slight silk stuff of Indian manufacture. Beneath the *jubbe* some wear a gown called *beden*, of white muslin, without lining or sleeves, and very short. The Meccawees are remarkable for being cleanly and tasteful in their attire. On feast-days and other public occasions their finery is displayed in the highest degree. The common shopkeeper, who walks about the whole year in his short gown with a napkin round his loins, appears in a pink-coloured *benish* lined with satin, a gold-embroidered turban, rich silk sash, and *jambea* with its scabbard ornamented with gold and silver. His wives and children are decked in the gaudiest colours; but after the feast is over the fine suits are laid aside. At home in his *dishabille*, the citizen seats himself near his projecting latticed window, holding in one hand the long snake of his Persian hookah, and in the other a small square fan made of the chippings of date-leaves, with which he drives away the flies. The women's dress is generally Indian silk gowns, and very large blue-striped trousers reaching down to the ankles, embroidered below with silver thread. Over these they throw a sort of cloak called *habra* or *mellays*, of black or striped silk, which covers the head, and has a graceful effect. The wealthy wear gold necklaces, bracelets, and silver ankle-rings, while the poorer classes have similar trinkets of horn, glass, or amber. A ring is sometimes passed through the cartilage of the nose and hangs down upon the upper-lip.



A young Female of the Coffee Mountains.

The face is concealed with a white or light-blue piece of cloth called *borko*, in which there are two holes worked for the eyes, but so large that nearly the entire features may be seen. This piece of female vanity, according to Ali Bey, had better be spared, as the illusion of hidden charms is completely dispelled when a sight is obtained of their lemon-coloured complexions, their hollow cheeks daubed all over with black or greenish-blue paint, their yellow teeth, and their lips stained of a reddish tile-colour. Though custom has reconciled them to these artificial means of heightening their beauty, their appearance is frightful and repulsive to strangers. It ought to be added, however, that in general they have fine eyes, regular noses, and hand-

some persons. The women at Loheia wear large veils, which conceal their faces so entirely that only one of their eyes can be seen. In the interior, females are less shy than in cities; they converse freely with strangers, and have their countenance quite uncovered. The Arabs of the Hauran use a coarse white cotton stuff for their *kombaz* or gown, and have their keffie tied with a rope of camels' hair.

In winter the Bedouins throw over the shirt a pelisse made of sheep-skins stitched together. Many even in summer wear these skins, as they learn from experience that thick clothing is a defence from heat as well as cold. The dress of the women consists of a wide cotton gown of a dark colour, blue, brown, or black, and on their heads a kerchief. They go barefooted at all seasons, have the same affection for ornaments as their more polished rivals in the city, and employ similar arts to increase their beauty. Silver rings are much worn both in their ears and noses. Round their naked waists both sexes wear from infancy a leathern girdle, or cord consisting of four or five thongs twisted together, which they adorn with amulets on pieces of riband. They all puncture their lips and dye them blue. Some of them also tattoo their cheeks, temples, forehead, breasts, arms, and ankles; and in these practices they are sometimes imitated by the men. Their eyes and eyelashes they paint black with a preparation of lead ore called *kohel*.

Fashion has a powerful influence in determining the various modes in which the hair and beard are worn. Within the Imam of Sanaa's dominions all men of whatever station shave their heads; in other parts of Yemen the hair is carefully preserved and knotted up behind. The Aenenes never cut their



long black tresses, but cherish them from infancy until they hang in twisted locks over their cheeks down to the breast. Every body without exception wears the beard of its natural length ; being considered as the ensign of honour and dignity, it is reckoned disgraceful to appear without it. Shaving is often prescribed as a penance for some fault, and it is one of the severest punishments that can be inflicted. By threatening this chastisement Saoud kept in order many a rebellious sheik. A favourite mare which he wished to purchase, belonging to a chief of the Beni Shammar and valued at 2500 dollars (£546), was yielded up by the reluctant owner the moment the barber produced his razor. Some old men still dye their beards red ; but this practice is generally disapproved.

In personal appearance the Arabs are of the middle size, lean and athletic. Their complexion is brown, their eyes and hair dark. When young they have a mild but expressive countenance ; in advanced age, their aspect is truly venerable. The Aenezes are rather diminutive in their stature, few of them being above five feet two or three inches in height ; but their features are good, their persons extremely well formed, and not so meagre or slight as some travellers have represented. Their deep-set but lively dark eyes sparkle from under their bushy black eyebrows with a fire unknown in our northern climes.

From living constantly in the open air the Arabs acquire a remarkable acuteness in all their senses. Their powers of vision and of hearing improve by continual exercise ; and on their vast plains they can descry distant objects far beyond the ken of a less practised eye. • Their sense of smelling, too, is

extremely nice ; hence their dislike to houses and towns, where they are disgusted with the nauseous exhalations which dense collections of people always generate. One of the most singular faculties they possess is the *athr*, or the power of distinguishing the footsteps of men and beasts on the sand, in the same manner as the American Indians discover impressions made upon the grass. This art is carried to a perfection that appears almost supernatural. From inspecting the footprint an Arab can tell whether the individual belonged to his own or some neighbouring tribe, and thus he is able to judge if he be a stranger or a friend. He likewise knows from the faintness or depth of the impression whether the person carried a load or not ;—whether he passed the same day or several days before. From examining the intervals between the steps he judges whether or not he was fatigued, as the pace becomes then more irregular and the intervals unequal ; hence he calculates the chances of overtaking him. Every Arab can distinguish the footmarks of his own camels from those of his neighbours ;—he knows whether the animal was pasturing or loaded, or mounted by one or more persons ; and can often discover, from marks in the sand, certain defects or peculiarities of formation that serve him as a clue to ascertain the owner. This sagacity becomes extremely useful in the pursuit of fugitives, or in searching after stolen cattle. Instances occur of camels being traced by their masters to the residence of the thief, at the distance of five or six days' journey. A Bédouin shepherd can track his own camel in a sandy valley where thousands of other footsteps cross the road in all directions, and sometimes he can tell the name of every one that has passed in

the course of the morning. Many secret transactions are brought to light by this curious art : an offender can scarcely hope to escape detection in any clandestine proceeding, as every footstep may be a witness against him, by recording his guilt on the public road, and in characters which he that runs may read. Of their remarkable acuteness in hearing, some wonderful but well-attested anecdotes are told of those who act as pilots in the Red Sea. They know very nearly the time when ships from India arrive ; and going down to the water's edge every night and morning, they lay their ear close to the surface for three or four minutes ; and if the ship is not more than 2 or 2½ degrees distant (120 or 150 miles) they can hear the report of the signal-gun or feel the ground shake, upon which they immediately set off with their pilot-boat.\*

The Arabs are thoroughly inured to fatigue, and can endure hunger and thirst to a surprising degree. They sometimes travel five days without tasting water, and can discover a brook or a natural spring by examining the soil and plants in the environs. They are dexterous horsemen, swift of foot, expert in handling their arms, and reckoned good marksmen since they became familiar with the use of the musket. Their most common arms are lances, sabres, matchlocks, pistols, and daggers. The shepherds have slings, with which they throw stones with great precision. The lance is made of wood or bamboo, twelve feet long, with an iron or steel pointed head. Occasionally they are covered with

---

\* Captain Newland mentions an instance of a ship which, after firing the morning gun, ran 95 miles by the log ; and when the pilot came on board in the evening he declared he had heard the signal at sunrise, on the faith of which he had put off with his boat.—*Philosoph. Transact.*, vol. lxii.

workmanship in gold and silver, but are often without any ornament except two balls or tufts of black ostrich-feathers placed near the top. In striking they balance it for some time over their head; and thrust forwards, or backwards if hard pressed by an enemy. Should a horseman be without a lance, he arms himself with a club or mace, which is made either wholly of iron or with a wooden handle. The foot-soldiers sometimes carry a small round target, made of the wild-ox hide, and covered with iron bars. Some wear iron caps and coats-of-mail, which either cover the whole body to the knees like a long gown, or reach only to the waist.

The hardy and athletic frame of the Bedouins is to be ascribed in part to their abstemious habits. They are models of sobriety, and never indulge in luxuries except on some festive occasion or on the arrival of a stranger. Their usual articles of food are rice, pulse, dates, milk, butter, and flour. The common people eat bread made of *dhourra*, which is coarse and insipid. When they have no gridiron they roll the dough into balls and cook it among embers. They generally eat their bread while hot and only half baked. Though not strangers to the invention of mills, they grind their flour with the hand, or merely bruise the grain between two stones. The daily and universal dish of the Aenezes is the *ayesh*, which is flour and sour camels' milk made into a paste and boiled. The *bourgoul* is wheat boiled with some leaven and then dried in the sun; and in this state it is preserved for the whole year. Bread is used at breakfast, which they bake in round cakes either upon gridirons or on heated stones, over which the dough is spread and immediately covered with glowing ashes; sometimes the fire is put into glazed

earthen pots, and the paste spread over the outside. In some districts they have abundance of poultry and garden-stuffs. Butter is used to excess. It is an ingredient in every dish ; all their food swims in it ; and they frequently swallow a whole cupful before breakfast. The operation of churning is performed in a goat-skin bag, which is tied to the tent-pole or the branch of a tree, and moved constantly backwards and forwards until coagulation takes place. Animal food is less used than vegetable, as it is not reckoned so wholesome in hot countries. Camels' flesh is rarely eaten ; it is more esteemed in winter than in summer, and that of the female is preferred. If a man of rank happens to be a visiter, a kid or a lamb is prepared : a guest of less distinction is treated with coffee, or bread and melted butter. Sometimes an entire sheep is roasted in a hole, dug in the sand and lined with heated stones. Upon these the flesh is laid, and then covered closely up with cinders and the wet skin of the animal. In an hour and a half the meat is cooked ; and as it loses none of its juices it has an excellent flavour. It is customary in the desert, when a sheep or goat is killed, to eat the liver and kidneys raw, with the addition of a little salt.

The Arabs drink little during meals ; but when camels' milk is plentiful it is handed round after dinner. In their style of eating they are slovenly and disagreeable, if tested by the standard of Europeans. They tear the meat with their fingers, if not cut into small pieces before it is set down. A wooden bowl containing the melted grease of the animal is placed in the middle, into which every morsel is dipped. They thrust the whole hand into the dish at once, which is soon emptied of its contents, as they eat with great avidity. The food being always very hot, it

requires some practice to enable a stranger to keep pace with the company and yet avoid burning the fingers. They have only two meals, breakfast in the morning, and dinner or supper at sunset. They wash their hands just before eating, but seldom after ;—merely licking the grease off their fingers, rubbing them on the scabbards of their swords or a corner of the tent-covering. Among the better classes table-napkins are used, or a long linen cloth which is spread under their knees. The women and slaves eat what is left by the men ; and it is seldom they have the good fortune to taste any thing but the fragments and refuse of the table. It is accounted a mark of respect towards superiors not to eat out of the same dish.

From their regular and temperate life the Arabs are subject to few diseases. Leprosy seems always to have been an endemic in that country. Of the three varieties, two are reckoned more disgusting than dangerous ; but the third is infectious, and very malignant. The ravages of the smallpox have long been arrested by artificial means ; as the practice of inoculation has been in use among the Bedouins from time immemorial. Mothers perform this operation on their children, by opening the skin of the arm with the prickle of a thorn or the point of a needle charged with infected matter. There are many tribes, however, where this art is unknown, and in consequence whole encampments have fallen victims to this unsparing malady. Vaccination has been lately introduced, and met with a favourable reception. Attacks of the Guinea-worm (the *Vena Medinensis*) are common in Yemen ; and supposed to originate from the use of putrid waters in which the eggs of the insect have been deposited.

The disorder is not fatal if the person affected can extract the worm, which is slender as a thread and two or three feet long, without breaking it. This is done by rolling it gradually on a small bit of wood as it comes out of the skin. Toothach is rare ; but ophthalmic disorders are very common. Jaundice, bilious complaints, and agues or intermittent fevers, are of frequent occurrence, though seldom fatal. At Medina, Burckhardt reckoned the mortality at about 1200 deaths annually, which may be considered a large proportion for a population of 10,000 or 12,000. The plague is the most terrible scourge of Arabia, though it is less destructive there than in some other Eastern countries. Notwithstanding the belief of the Hejazees, that the Almighty has excluded it from the holy territory, it made its appearance in 1816. At Yembo, forty or fifty persons expired daily ; while at Jidda the proportion was as high as two hundred and fifty. The Arabs seldom employ medicine for it ; but, though predestinarians, the common belief in Europe is erroneous, that supposes they use no precautionary measures. Burckhardt states that many of the townsmen fled to the desert ; alleging as an excuse, that although the distemper was a messenger from Heaven, sent to call them to a better world, yet, being conscious of their unworthiness, and that they did not merit this special mark of grace, they thought it more advisable to decline it for the present, and make their escape from the town. The Yembawees have a superstitious custom of leading a she-camel through the town, covered with feathers, balls, and all sorts of ornaments, after which it is slaughtered and the flesh thrown to the dogs. By this process they hope to get quit of the malady at once, as they imagine

that it has been concentrated in the body of the devoted animal. The cholera morbus, now fearfully familiar to British ears, is no stranger in Arabia. At Mecca, in the month of May 1831, it raged with the greatest violence ; having carried off above 5500 persons in the course of twenty or thirty days. Of 50,000 pilgrims assembled that year nearly one-half are said to have perished. The dead were buried in their clothes indiscriminately, in large trenches dug for the purpose. Medina, Yembo, and Suez, were visited at the same time by this dreadful epidemic.

An Arab's property consists chiefly in his flocks ; the profits of which enable him to procure the necessary provisions of wheat and barley, and occasionally a new suit of clothes for his wife and daughters. No family can exist without one camel at least ; a man who has but ten is reckoned poor,—thirty or forty place him in easy circumstances, and he who possesses sixty is rich. The annual expenditure for an Arab possessed of moderate affluence is calculated by Burckhardt at between £35 and £40 sterling. The lower classes spend less in proportion. Wealth in such a fluctuating state of society is extremely precarious, and the most rapid changes of fortune are daily experienced.

Domestic industry is little known among the Bedouins ; the husband enjoys his amusements, while all the household cares devolve on his females. This degradation of the weaker sex is common to the Arabs with most other Asiatic nations. Women are regarded as beings much inferior to men, and to them exclusively all the labour and menial offices in the tent are assigned. In these employments there is sometimes a curious inversion of character,—women work at the loom, while the men milk the



cattle and handle the distaff, without regarding these effeminate duties as in the least derogatory to their masculine dignity. The loom, called *nutou*, is extremely simple, being merely two sticks fixed into the ground with a third placed across them.

The Arabs practise polygamy in common with most other Eastern nations; but in general they are content with one wife, and rarely avail themselves of the legal privilege of marrying four. The rich espouse as many wives and keep as many concubines as they can maintain; though this luxury is too expensive to be generally adopted. But those who restrict themselves to one wife make amends for this self-denial by indulging in variety, or entertaining at the same time a number of female slaves.

In courtship the Arabs often display a great deal of gallantry; for the constraint to which their women are subjected does not altogether prevent intrigues. But the opportunities of the lover's meeting or seeing his mistress are more rare; and the youth who is bold enough to trespass on the sanctuary of the *meharrem* finds his path encompassed with perils, battles, and death. The desert is the genuine theatre of those keen passions depicted in the Arabian tales, and perhaps the Bedouins are the only people in the East that can with justice be entitled true lovers. While Europeans merely languish and sigh, and while the townsmen compose amorous verses, the Bedouins sometimes cut and slash their arms with knives to show the violence of their affections. The pastoral life is favourable to forming acquaintances; and there are occasions when the youth of both sexes mingle in parties to sing and dance in the open space before or behind the tents.

The marriage-ceremony in general is very simple. Negotiations commence with the father of the maiden, who usually consults the wishes of his daughter, and if her consent is gained the match takes place. The marriage-day being appointed perhaps five or six days after, the bridegroom comes with a lamb in his arms to the tent of his betrothed, and there cuts the animal's throat before witnesses, and as soon as the blood falls upon the ground the ceremony is regarded as completed. It is accompanied with feasting and singing; all the guests present must eat bread and meat; for this is a circumstance absolutely necessary on such occasions. The form of betrothing differs in different tribes; sometimes the friend of the lover, holding the girl's father by the hand, merely says before witnesses, "You declare that you give your daughter as wife to ——." Among the Bedouins of Sinai the father of the bride gives to the suitor a twig of a tree or shrub, or something green, which he sticks in his turban and wears for three days, to show that he has taken a virgin in matrimony. The betrothed is seldom made acquainted with the change that is to take place in her condition. On returning home in the evening with the cattle, she is met at a short distance from the camp by her future spouse and a couple of his young friends, who carry her by force to her father's tent. If she entertains any suspicion of their designs she defends herself with stones, and often inflicts wounds on the assailants though she has no dislike to the lover; for the more she struggles, bites, kicks, cries, and strikes, the more she is applauded ever after by her own companions. Sometimes she escapes to the neighbouring mountains, and several days elapse before the bridegroom can

find her ;—her female friends, meantime, being apprized of her hiding-place, furnish her with provisions. When brought to her father's tent she is placed in the women's apartment, where one of the young men immediately throws over her an abba in the name of her future husband ; and this is often the first time she learns who the person is to whom she is betrothed. She is then dressed by her mother and female relations in her wedding-suit, which is provided by the bridegroom ; and being mounted on a camel ornamented with tassels and shreds of cloth, she is conducted, still screaming and struggling in the most unruly manner, three times round the tent, while her companions utter loud exclamations. If the husband belong to a distant camp the women accompany her ; and during the procession decency obliges her to cry and sob most bitterly. These lamentations and struggles continue after marriage ; and sometimes she repeats her flight to the mountains, refusing to return until she is found out, or is even far advanced in pregnancy.

Marriages are generally solemnized on the Friday evenings, and the contracts are drawn up by the *cadi* ; if the bride be a widow or a divorced woman it is attended with little ceremony or rejoicing. This sort of connexion is always reckoned ill omened ; no resistance is made,—no feast takes place,—no guest will eat of the nuptial bread ;—for thirty days the husband will not taste any provisions belonging to his wife, and visitors when they come to drink coffee bring their own cups, because to touch any vessel belonging to the newly-married widow would be considered the sure road to perdition. Sheiks and rich citizens display more splendour in their dresses and entertainments. The bride is decked

out in the finest attire, perfumed with essences, and every part of her body painted with figures of flowers, trees, houses, antelopes and other animals.

Instead of receiving a marriage-portion, the husband pays for his wife,—the sum varies according to rank and circumstances. Among the Arabs of Sinai it is from five to ten dollars; but sometimes thirty if the girl is handsome and well connected. At Mecca the price paid for respectable maidens is from 40 to 300 dollars (£8, 15s. to £65, 12s. 6d.); and on the borders of Syria young men obtain their masters' daughters by serving a number of years. Part of the money only is paid down, the rest standing over as a kind of debt, or as a security in case of divorce. The price of a widow is never more than half, generally but a third, of what is paid for a virgin.

The sacred tie of marriage has but a slender hold on the Arabs, and may be dissolved on slight occasions at the pleasure of the husband. This facility of separation relaxes morality, though it reflects no dishonour on the woman, or her family. She may be repudiated three or four times, and yet free from any stain or imputation on her character. It is not uncommon for a Bedouin before attaining the age of forty or forty-five to have had fifty wives. If the woman depart of her own accord she receives nothing, and even forfeits the unpaid portion of her dowry; but if she is turned away without any valid reason or proof of misconduct, she is entitled to a small sum of money, a camel, a goat, a copper boiler and hand-mill, with some other articles of kitchen furniture. This operates as a check upon the evil, and makes the customs in some degree correct the laws. The form consists of two words, "*Ent taleka!*" (Thou art di-

forced): when once pronounced it cannot be revoked ; but it does not prevent the man from again marrying the same person, though she may in the interval have had several other husbands. Many instances occur of conjugal fidelity ; and a Bedouin has been known in a fit of distraction to commit suicide on seeing his wife give her hand to a second bridegroom.

The law also allows females a kind of divorce. If ill used, or not happy, they may fly for refuge to their father's tent, and their husbands have no right to reclaim them. The extreme jealousy of the Arabs leads them to speak but seldom or indirectly on this subject ; and instead of saying " my wife " or " my daughters," they say " my house " and " those at home." In domestic quarrels the loquacity of the spouse very often triumphs over the just cause of her partner ; and rather than see himself overpowered by so contemptible an instrument, and exposed to ridicule in the presence of his neighbours, he pronounces in a moment of irritation the fatal " *Ent taleka !*" which is always applauded by the spectators. These broils are the most frequent cause of divorces, which are perhaps to be ascribed rather to the unruly temper of these wild sons of the desert, than to any want of conjugal feeling.

Children are brought up in the most hardy manner ; the name is given immediately on their birth, and at the age of six or seven the boys undergo the ceremony of circumcision. This is always celebrated with feasting and rejoicing ; and it is generally arranged by those who have families in a camp that the operation shall take place on the same day. On these occasions the boys are dressed in the richest stuffs, set upon fine horses highly adorned, and are

carried in public procession with drums beating before them; the men exhibit equestrian feats and warlike evolutions; the common people have sham fights and other buffooneries; while the young women join in the song and the dance, taking care by removing their veils to allow their lovers a hasty glance of their beauty as they pass.

Funerals in Arabia are attended with certain peculiar circumstances. Some tribes bury with the dead man his sword, turban, and girdle. From the scarcity of linen the Bedouins not unfrequently wrap the body in an abba, which serves as a windingsheet. Women, but not men, wear mourning. Females are hired on these occasions, and paid a small sum by the hour, to howl in the most heart-rending accents: sometimes they dance before the house of the deceased with sticks and lances in their hands, tearing their arms, faces, and hair, and behaving like furies. Medina, according to Burekhardt, is the only place where this absurd custom is not practised. The female relatives of the family accompany the bier through the streets dressed in black; and, as a further demonstration of their grief, they stain their hands and feet blue with indigo, which they suffer to remain for eight days. During all that time they abstain from milk, alleging that its white colour but ill accords with the gloom of their minds.

Though rude in manners and fierce in their general character, the Arabs are not without civility and politeness. Their usual salutation is the *Salaam aleikum* (Peace be with you). Shaking hands and kissing after a long absence are every where practised, and sometimes it is customary to quote a passage of the Koran. The Bedouins know nothing of those numerous court-phrases and cere-

monious expressions current in the towns. They simply wish a good morning when they meet their friends upon the road, or a farewell when they depart. When an Egyptian hails an acquaintance, he says "May your day be white;" and there is absolutely no other reply but "May yours be like milk." These studied and superfluous compliments a Bedouin would consider at once ridiculous and ill-bred. They attach no indelicacy to the disgusting practice of eructation after meals; but they are shocked beyond measure at an involuntary accident which is the natural consequence of indigestion or certain articles of diet. An habitual offender in this way is deemed unworthy of being admitted as a witness before the cadi; and some for this reason have been obliged to betake themselves to voluntary banishment. In towns there is a greater ostentation of politeness:—"Welcome!" says the obsequious shopkeeper of Mecca to his foreign customer, "a thousand times welcome! you are the guest of the holy city; my whole property is at your disposal!" In Yemen, persons who value themselves on their good breeding use many compliments. In ordinary visits pipes and coffee are always presented. Sometimes the beards and clothes of the guests are sprinkled with rose-water and perfumes. Men salute each other by kissing the beard or hand, and women by kissing the forehead, chin, and both cheeks. Even in quarrelling among themselves the Arabs do not use the ill names and scurrilous language so frequently heard in the mouths of more polished nations.

Hospitality, the ancient and hereditary virtue of the nation, is still exercised in all its primitive cordiality. A hungry Bedouin always divides his scanty meal with a still more hungry wanderer. If a

stranger be seen coming from afar towards the camp, he is reckoned the guest of the first person that describes him ; and for this honour there is often a generous rivalry which leads to serious altercations. When he alights, the friendly carpet and the ready meal are spread for him. So long as he remains his life and property are perfectly secure ; and should a robbery occur, the host, if he possess the means, will indemnify him for whatever loss he may sustain while under his protection. His person is sacred, and he may trust the fidelity of his entertainer the moment he has eaten bread and salt under his roof. An Arab considers no emergency so urgent or embarrassing as to palliate the neglect, much less the violation, of that social virtue. He has been heard to declare, that if his enemy should present himself at the door of his tent carrying the head of his own son, it would not exclude him from a hospitable reception.

These generous dispositions have been subjected to certain regulations ; and it cannot be denied that in some instances they proceed less from goodness of heart than from vanity or the fear of reproach ; for the greatest insult that can be offered to a Bedouin is to tell him that he does not treat his guests well. The hours of hospitality are numbered,—three days and eight hours are the term, after which a stranger ceases to be a ward, and becomes a simple visiter. He is not dismissed ; but if he prolong his stay he is expected to assist in the domestic business of the tent,—in fetching water, milking the camel, or feeding the horse. Should he decline these menial offices he may still remain, but he will be censured for ingratitude ; or he may go to another tent, where he will receive a fresh welcome ; and if he has a distant journey to perform, he may, by changing his



residence every third or fourth day, be comfortably entertained until he reach his destination.

It is a received custom in every part of the desert, that a woman may entertain strangers in the absence of her husband ; when this is not permitted, some male relation does the honours of the table. In certain parts of Nejed, a guest is welcomed by pouring on his head a cup of melted butter. Among the Azir tribes a practice exists not very consistent with our ideas of female honour : when a stranger arrives, he is required to be the companion of his hostess for the night, whatever be her age or condition ; and it depends upon his rendering himself agreeable, whether he is to be honourably treated or dismissed with disgrace. This custom the Wahabees abolished ; but on a representation being made by the tribe to Abdelazeez, of the misfortunes that had befallen them for having abandoned the good old practice of their forefathers, permission was granted to honour their guests as before. The established laws of the desert sanction manners that to European nations must appear extravagant and unnatural. But the influx of foreigners, and especially the gold of Mohammed Ali, have had a pernicious effect on the virtues of the Bedouins.

Another singular institution is that of the *wasy* or guardianship. An Arab may, in the prime of life, request a friend to act as guardian to his children. If the trust is accepted the friend is solemnly installed in his office ; and one family is thus constituted the hereditary protectors of another. To the weak, such as minors, women, and old men, this practice affords some security, however imperfect, against the oppressions of the strong. It is observed by all the Arabs of Nejed, but not gene-

rally throughout the desert ; and affords another instance of those peculiar ties, domestic as well as political, by which a fierce and warlike community are held together and protected amidst the lawless ravages occasioned by their own dissensions.

That the Arabs are brave, and capable of displaying exalted courage, was confirmed by numerous exploits in the Turkish campaign. Examples might easily be adduced of the most heroic personal valour. The Wahabee soldiers fought with desperation, encouraged by the songs of the female warriors. It was the custom for the favourite wife of the sheik, on the day of battle, to ride in front on a swift dromedary splendidly caparisoned ; and on occasions of extreme importance she had her legs tied under the belly of the animal,—a signal to the troops that they must either conquer or perish by her side. She formed the rallying-point when the combat was at the hottest, and to kill or take her captive was reckoned the proudest achievement of the enemy. When an Arab is hotly pursued, he may save his life by throwing himself from his steed and begging for mercy ; but he does it at the expense of his honour, and forfeits his mare and his clothes. If he refuses to yield after repeatedly hearing the cry of “ *Howel ! howel !* ” (Get down !) the pursuer instantly stabs him with his lance. Some tribes use battle-banners ornamented with ostrich-feathers ; but these are never displayed except in important actions ; and their loss is regarded as a signal of defeat. All Bedouin tribes without exception have their *agyd*, who acts as commander-in-chief ; for it is a remarkable circumstance in the policy of the desert, that, during a campaign in actual warfare, the authority of the sheik is completely set aside, and the soldiers are

wholly under the control of the agyd. This person is esteemed as a kind of augur or saint; he often decides the operations of the war by his dreams, visions, or prognostications, and announces the lucky or unlucky day for attack. His office is hereditary; but he possesses no more coercive power than the sheik, and his authority ceases whenever the combatants return to their homes. This curious institution doubtless was intended to check any increase of power in the person of the chief of the tribe, by rendering it difficult for him to engage in feuds merely from private motives.

In the desert the character of the soldier passes by an easy transition into that of the brigand. The Arabs may be styled a nation of robbers (*harami*); but they are far from attaching to this practice any ideas of criminality or disgrace. They consider the profession as honourable, and one of the most flattering titles that could be conferred on a youthful hero. They rob, indiscriminately, enemies, friends, and neighbours; and these acts are daily committed in their own tent without entailing any permanent disgrace on the offender. The defenceless traveller is waylaid, seized, and stript of every thing; but his life is not taken unless he resist, or shed the blood of a Bedouin. There are many instances of their extreme ignorance in appreciating the value of their booty. A peasant has been known to boil a bag of pearls, mistaking them for rice, and afterwards throw them away as useless.

The Bedouins have reduced robbery to a science, and digested its various branches into a complete and regular system. In distant excursions every horseman chooses a companion (*zammal*), and both are mounted on a young and strong camel, carrying

a provision of food and water, that the mare may be fresh and vigorous at the moment of attack. If the expedition is to be on foot, each of the party takes a small stock of flour, salt, and water. They clothe themselves in rags, to make their ransom easier if they should be taken. In this guise they approach the devoted camp under cloud of night, and when all are fast asleep. One of them endeavours to irritate the watch-dogs; when they attack him, he flies and artfully draws them off, leaving the premises unprotected. The *harami* then cuts the cords that fasten the legs of the camels, when they instantly rise from their kneeling posture, and walk away, as all unloaded camels do, without the least noise. To quicken their pace the tails of the foremost or strongest are twisted, and the rest follow at the same trot. The third actor in the robbery keeps watch at the tent-door with a heavy bludgeon, to knock down such of the inmates as may venture to interfere. In this manner fifty camels are often stolen, and driven by forced marches to a safe distance during the night. An extra share of the prey is always allowed to these three principal adventurers.

It frequently happens that the robbers are surrounded and seized; and the mode of treating their prisoners affords a curious illustration of the influence which custom, handed down through many generations, still exercises over the minds of these fierce barbarians. It is an established usage in the desert, that if any person who is in actual danger from another can touch a third person, or any inanimate thing which he has in his hands, or with which he is in contact; or if he can touch him by spitting, or throwing a stone at him, and at the same time exclaim, "I am thy protected!" the individual

is bound to grant him the protection he demands. This law or point of honour is called the *dakheil*; and however absurd or capricious, it seems naturally to arise out of those scenes of violence, the ferocity of which it is calculated to soften. A robber detected in the act of plundering is always anxious to avail himself of the privileges of this artificial convention; while the inmates of the tent are equally desirous to prevent him. The person who first seizes the prisoner demands on what business he is come? "I came to rob: God has overthrown me;" is the common answer. The captor (*rabat*) then binds him hand and foot, and beats him with a club, until he exclaims *Yeneffa!* "I renounce!" (namely, the benefit of any protector). But this renunciation being only valid for one day, the prisoner (*rabiet*) is secured in a hole dug in the ground, with his feet chained to the earth, his hands tied, and his twisted hair fastened to two stakes at both sides of his head. This temporary grave is covered with tent-poles, corn-sacks, and other heavy articles;—a small aperture only being left through which he may breathe. Here he is detained, and every endeavour used to extort from him the highest possible ransom.

Still the buried captive does not despair; and circumstances sometimes favour his escape. If he can contrive through the aperture to spit upon a man or a child, or receive from their hand the smallest morsel of food, he claims the rights of the *dakheil*. To obtain his release gives rise to many adventurous intrigues and ingenious stratagems. His mother or his sister will often enter the camp in the garb of a beggar, or during night, and having put the end of a worsted thread in his mouth, she retires, still unwinding the clew, to some neighbouring

tent, and places the other end in the hand of the owner, who by this means is guided to the prisoner, and claims him as his "protected." The right of freedom is at once allowed; the thongs which tied his hair are cut, his fetters are struck off, and he is entertained by the captor as his guest, with all the honours of Arabian hospitality. To avoid paying a ransom, a prisoner will often remain six months under this rigorous custody, always concealing his real name, and giving himself out for a poor mendicant. He is, however, generally recognised, and obliged to purchase his liberty at the expense of all his property in horses, camels, sheep, tents, provisions, and baggage.

Should the robbers fail in their enterprise, and meet, when returning, a hostile party of the tribe they intended to pillage, their declaration, "We have eaten salt in such a tent," is a passport that ensures them a safe journey.

The Arabs are the most adroit and audacious thieves in the world; their address, indeed, in this art is proverbial. They spring behind the horseman, seize him with one hand by the throat and with the other rifle him of his money. They stole the swords from the sides of the French officers in Egypt, and even purloined clothes and valuable articles from under their heads while sleeping. These acts of rapacity they always palliate by using a softened and delicate language when relating them. Instead of saying, I robbed a man of this or that article, they say, "I gained it." They even pretend a sort of kindred or relationship between themselves and the victim they plunder. "Undress thyself," exclaims the brigand of the desert, as he rides furiously upon the wayfaring stranger; "thy aunt (meaning his

own wife) is without a garment!" This license they regard as a sort of birthright or national prerogative. If they are reprov'd for their depredations, "You forget that I am an Arab" is always the reply; which is spoken with a tone and expression of countenance that shows how little the haughty marauder is affected by the supposed opprobrium. But the chivalry of pillage, like that of hospitality, has been impaired by their intercourse with strangers. The honourable asylum of the tent has often been violated, and the sacred shield of the dakheil has not always screened the unfortunate who sought its protection.

The natural jealousy and fiery temperament of the Arabs have always proved a source of the most implacable enmity among themselves. They betray the quickest sensibility to any affront or injury; and instances might be multiplied where a contemptuous word, an indecent action, or the most trifling violation of etiquette, can only be expiated by the blood of the offender. If one sheik say to another, "Thy bonnet is dirty," or "The wrong side of thy turban is out," it is considered a mortal offence. To spit on the beard of another, even accidentally, is an insult scarcely to be forgiven. Murder is the deepest injury that can be committed. The Arab code regulates the revenge for blood (called *thar*) by the nicest distinctions; and it is perhaps owing to this salutary institution more than to any other, that the warlike tribes of the desert have been prevented from exterminating each other.

It is a universal law among them, that he who sheds blood owes on that account blood to the family of the slain person; and this debt may be required not only from the actual murderer, but from all his relations. "The right of the *thar* is limited

within certain degrees of kindred. In the case of a slain parent, his lineal descendants to the fifth generation inherit the sacred duty of revenging his death on a corresponding series of descendants on the other side. This right is never lost by prescription, but devolves on both sides to the latest posterity. If one death is simply avenged by another, the account is considered to be cleared ; but if two of the assassin's family be killed by the relatives of the deceased, the former retaliates. Though murder may be expiated by fine or confiscation, it depends upon the next relations of the slain to accept or reject the penalty. If the offer is deemed unsatisfactory, the homicide, and all his kin comprised within the law of vengeance, make their escape to some friendly tribe. A sacred custom allows the fugitives three days and four hours, during which their enemies abstain from the pursuit : the exiles are permitted to return so soon as a reconciliation can be effected.

The *dye*, or fine for a murdered man, varies among the different tribes from 1000 to 500 piastres (£50 to £25), and the sum is often made up by contributions in money or cattle from the friends of the guilty person, who are generally liberal with their assistance on such occasions. The Beni Harb in Hejaz fix the price of blood at 800 dollars (£175). Among the Aenezes it is rated at fifty she-camels, one riding-camel, a mare, a black slave, a coat-of-mail, and a gun.\* The quality of these articles is not much regarded, and it is seldom they are all demanded, as the wives or daughters of the slayer petition earnestly for some abatement. The matter being finally settled, a she-camel is brought to the tent of the adversary and there, killed, that blood



may be expiated by blood. The parties, now reconciled, feast upon the flesh of the animal ; and at parting the homicide flourishes a white handkerchief on his lance, as a public notification that he is " free from blood." This mode of arrangement is not common among the more wealthy and independent tribes. Most of the great sheiks regard it as shameful to compromise in any degree for the slaughter of their relations.

Amid the continual hostilities in which the Arabs are involved, debts of blood are frequently incurred, when the slaughter is accompanied with treachery, or contrary to the law of nations. When a tribe violates the rights of war by killing their enemies as they lie wounded on the field, the adversary retaliates by killing double the number with the same circumstances of cruelty. However revolting this policy may appear, an Arab would be censured were he not to follow the general practice.\*

The amusements of the Arabs are comparatively few,—chess, draughts, and mangela, are the only games they play ; the latter consists of a wooden table with a dozen holes, into which two players drop so many little stones, beans, or shells. The vacant unvaried life which they lead, and the monotonous scenery amidst which they dwell, must often render existence irksome. It is to relieve this weariness and want of novelty that they have recourse to tobacco, kaad, hashish, and other intoxicating stimulants. Smoking is universal among

---

\* Hence we may extenuate the slaughter of the captive kings (who were Bedouin sheiks) by the Israelites, as being dictated less by a wanton desire of bloodshed, than by the necessity of adhering to the usages of the land where they dwelt ; a dereliction from which must have diminished the respect in which they were held by their neighbours.—*Judges*, chap. viii.

all classes, notwithstanding the warmth of the climate and the natural dryness of their constitution. Persons of opulence and fashion always carry with them a box filled with odoriferous wood,—a bit of which, when put into the pipe, communicates to the tobacco a fragrant smell and a very agreeable taste. Throwing the jereed is a kind of rude tournament which they frequently practise. This is a blunt spear, made of heavy wood, about a yard long and the thickness of a mopstick. The object of the game, in which they evince the most astonishing dexterity, is for one party to pursue and the other to fly, and try to elude being struck with the weapon. Sometimes they amuse themselves with sham-fights; and nothing can be more picturesque, than to see a group of wild men huddled together in the greatest apparent confusion with drawn swords and couched lances. The more domestic pastimes are dancing, singing, and story-telling, for which they have a singular passion, and which fill up all their leisure hours. There is a species of song common all over the desert, in which the youths of both sexes join in the chorus, accompanying it with clapping of hands and various motions of the body. It is called the *mesamer*, and is the only opportunity which the lover has of serenading his mistress; the verses are often composed extempore, and relate to the beauty and qualities of the beloved object. They have war-songs, called *hadou*, in praise of their chiefs, and chants to enliven their camels; for it is well known that that animal never moves with so much ease as when he hears his master sing.\* When an Aeneze recites verses or ancient

---

\* Of the *Asamer*, or Camel-Driver's Song, Burckhardt gives the

poetry, he accompanies his voice with the *rebaba*, a kind of guitar, the only musical instrument used in the desert. Some tribes are more famous than others for their poetical and vocal talents. The people of Jof sing among the tents of the Aenezes for a trifling remuneration ; and in towns there are regular professors of the art, who attend at the coffeehouses and lend their aid on festive occasions. A common entertainment among the Bedouins is the reciting of tales after the manner of the Arabian Nights.

Notwithstanding the natural abilities of this people, the arts and sciences are neither cultivated nor encouraged. The literary splendours of the caliphate have long been quenched. Except Abulfeda, in whom the sun of Arabian learning appears to have set, no historian, philosopher, or writer of any celebrity, has risen to dissipate the gloom with which the Tartars in the thirteenth century overspread the East under the banners of Zingis Khan. In almost every mosque there is a school, having a foundation for the support of teachers and the instruction of poor scholars in the common elements of reading, writing, and arithmetic. In large towns there are academies, colleges, and other seminaries of education, in which astronomy, astrology, medicine, and some other sciences, are taught ; but, from the want of books and competent masters, extremely little progress is made. The principal employment among men of letters is the interpretation of the Koran and the study of ancient Mohammedan his-

---

following specimen :—" Lord preserve them from all threatening dangers ! Let their limbs be pillars of iron !"

In their amatory songs the lover sometimes expresses his passion in epithets that sound rather oddly in European ears :—" O, Ghalia ! if my father were a jackass, I would sell him to purchase Ghalia !"

tory. All the Bedouins throughout Arabia are entirely ignorant of letters. The Wahabee chief took pains to instruct them, by establishing schools in every village of Nejed, and obliging parents to superintend the education of their children. Deraiah was made an attractive seat for learned ulemas, by collecting valuable libraries from all parts of the country ; but in spite of every effort these warlike tribes still remain, as might be expected, a most illiterate race. Among a people so superstitious as the Arabs no science is so much cultivated as astrology, which is held in high repute. Though the Koran expressly forbids the prying into futurity by any form of divination, yet a Moslem seldom concludes a bargain without consulting the stars.

In a country where there are so few patients, it cannot be expected that the healing art should be much studied, or held in great esteem. The common practitioners know little more than the use of simples, and the technical terms, such as they find them in the books of Avicenna. Physicians are obliged to act as chemists, apothecaries, surgeons, farriers, and cattle-doctors ; and yet, with all this variety of employments, they can scarcely earn a livelihood. If the sick man die they get no reward ; and this custom has taught them to use many petty and disgraceful artifices to obtain payment beforehand. There is not a single individual of this profession in the whole of Nejed. The natives cure themselves, and their mode of treatment is sufficiently rude. They heal sabre-wounds by applying raw flesh taken from a camel newly killed. In bowel-complaints they have recourse to aenna. For headach, colic, and sore eyes, the most approved remedy is a redhot

iron. In cases of rheumatism the patient is rubbed with warm oil or the fat of mutton ; in dropsical complaints the water is drawn off by means of setons in the back. Toothach is sometimes cured by inhaling the smoke of a certain plant ; and the bite of venomous serpents by sucking out the poison. Bloodletting is performed with a common knife, and the lower classes sometimes scarify their legs, being of opinion that this has a tendency to improve their strength. From the same persuasion the inhabitants of Yemen anoint their bodies with oil, which protects them from the heat of the sun, and by closing the pores of the skin is supposed to check the debilitating effects of too copious perspiration. The Arabs have many family nostrums, and are implicit believers in the efficacy of charms and other mystic arts. No species of knowledge is more highly venerated than that of the occult sciences, which afford a maintenance to a vast number of quacks and impudent pretenders. The science of *Ism Allah* (or Name of God) enables the possessor to discover what is passing in his absence, to expel evil spirits, cure diseases, and dispose of the winds and seasons as he chooses. Those who have advanced far in this study pretend to calm tempests at sea by the rules of art, or say their prayers at noon in Mecca, without stirring from their own houses in Aden or Bagdad. The *Simia* is not quite so sublime a science, as it teaches merely the feats and illusions of jugglers. Dervises and mollahs practise it, and appear to the astonished spectators to pierce their bodies with lances, strike sharp-pointed instruments into their eyes, or leap from the roofs of houses upon a pole shod with iron, which seems to run through their

body, while they are carried like spitted victims about the streets. The *Kurra* is the art of composing billets or amulets, which secure the wearer from the power of enchantments and all sorts of accidents. They are also employed to give cattle an appetite for food, and clear houses from flies or other vermin. The practice of fortune-telling, which they call *ramle*, is very common. The natives of Oman are peculiarly skilled in sorcery (*sihr*); they are inferior, however, to the witches and wizards of Europe, as they know nothing about the art of riding through the air on broomsticks, sailing to India in cockleshells, or holding nocturnal revelries in their mosques, under the visible presidency of Satan.

The Arabs pay great attention to their language, which they speak and write with the utmost care. No tongue, perhaps, is diversified by so many dialects: the pronunciation in Yemen differs from that of Tehama; and both are distinct from the Bedouin phraseology. It is a mistake, however, to suppose, as Niebuhr and Michaelis have done, that these dialects differ as widely as the Spanish or Italian does from the Latin. Burckhardt, who had the best opportunity of judging, says, that notwithstanding the vast extent of country in which the language prevails, whoever has learned one dialect will easily understand all the rest. According to this traveller, it is in the desert where the purest Arabic is spoken. The Bedouins, though they have different idioms, are remarkable for the grammatical accuracy as well as the elegance of their expressions. Next to them are the Meccawees and natives of Hejaz, whose language approaches nearer to the old written dialect than that of any other district. The inhabitants of Bagdad and Sanaa, and the Yemenees in general, speak with purity, but

have a harsh accent. At Cairo the pronunciation is worse; and it gradually degenerates among the Libyan and Syrian Arabs. After them come the tribes on the Barbary coast,—at Tripoli, Tunis, and Algiers; and, lastly, the natives of Fez and Morocco, whose rough articulation is considered the extreme point from the pure Bedouin standard; yet this difference is not greater, perhaps, than between the spoken language of England and Scotland. All the Arabs pay much attention to penmanship, though there is great diversity in their style of writing. The several countries have also their peculiar method of folding letters. In Hejaz they are sealed with gum-arabic, and a small vessel filled for the purpose is suspended near the gate of every khan or public-house. Wax is never used, as the heat prevents it from retaining the impression.

In the mechanical arts the Arabs are extremely deficient. The Bedouins know little else than the tanning of leather and the weaving of coarse fabrics. They have a few blacksmiths and saddlers; but all handicraft occupations are considered degrading. There is only one watchmaker at Jidda, and not a single shoemaker in Hejaz. In Yemen there are workers in glass, gold, and silver; but the artificers in the precious metals are all Jews and Banians.

The want of home manufactures obliges the natives to supply their markets by means of foreign trade. Though their ports have long lost their celebrity as the grand *entrepôts* for the commodities of the East, they still continue to enjoy a portion of the commerce between India and Europe. Jidda has become the principal emporium of the Arabian trade. It is perhaps the wealthiest town of the same extent in the Turkish dominions; hence its name, which

means "rich," is well bestowed. A few years ago it employed about 250 ships in the Red Sea. The two main branches of its commerce are coffee and Indian produce. In May the annual fleets, from Calcutta, Surat, and Bombay, make their appearance, bringing different kinds of goods,—Cashmere shawls, cocoa-nuts, rice, sugar, drugs of all sorts, china and hard ware, pipes, glass beads, rosaries, mirrors, and cards. These commodities are mostly sold for cash to India merchants, some of whom possess capital to the amount of £150,000 or £200,000 sterling; while several inferior houses have capitals of £40,000 or £50,000. Sales of entire cargoes are often made in the course of half an hour, and the money paid down next day. Trade is there carried on chiefly by barter, or by cash-transactions. Credit is with difficulty obtained; hence no Arabian merchant can contract debts which he is unable to pay, and consequently there are no mercantile failures in speculations such as daily occur in Europe. From Jidda the India goods are sent to Suez and Cairo, whence they are dispersed over Egypt and the ports of the Mediterranean. The returns from these countries are made either in dollars or sequins, or in produce, such as wheat and barley, for which Arabia depends on Egypt; an inferior sort of tobacco, which is called *tambak*; Bedouin cloaks, coarse Turkish carpets, cotton quilts, linen for shirts, red and yellow slippers, and other articles of dress; besides a variety of commodities which are not manufactured in Arabia. Ships laden with coffee are constantly arriving from Mocha, and their cargoes are generally converted into dollars. This branch of trade suffered, when the Mocha coffee was supplanted, in the markets of European Turkey, Asia



Minor, and Syria, by that produced in the East and West Indies; but there is little doubt that it will revive under the auspices of Mohammed Ali, who may be said to command the entire commerce of the Arabian Gulf, now that he has become the independent sovereign of Egypt and Syria. With this view he has already proposed to augment his navy; to construct a canal from Suez to the Nile; to establish regular marts on the Mediterranean coast; and open a communication between the Orontes and the Euphrates. Should these mighty projects be carried into effect, a few years may behold a total revolution in the mercantile intercourse between the nations of the East and the West. The annual exports of coffee at present, from Jidda, Mocha, Hodeida, and other contiguous ports, is estimated at 12,000 tons. The duties on the best are 100 per cent., and fully 150 per cent. on the inferior sorts. Independently of coffee, the export-trade of Mocha is very considerable in gum-arabic, myrrh, and frankincense. Muscat carries on a valuable trade with India and the Persian Gulf. Its inhabitants are reputed excellent seamen.

There is one circumstance connected with the commerce of Arabia, that deserves notice, from the attention which it has recently excited in this country; we mean the communication with India by steam conveyance. Two routes have been proposed, both of which are practicable, but attended with obstacles that it may be difficult to overcome. One of these is by the Persian Gulf along the Euphrates to Bir or Beles, and thence across the desert to the Mediterranean at Scanderoon, or the mouth of the Orontes, a distance of sixty-seven miles. Captain Chesney, who surveyed that cele-

brated river, considered it navigable for steamers as high as Bir; and that a constant supply of fuel might be found in the wood, charcoal, bitumen, and naphtha, of which abundance is to be had throughout the whole line. The distances, and time necessary to accomplish this route, he estimates thus:—

	Miles.	Days.
From Falmouth to Malta,.....	2300	15
— Malta to Scanderoon,.....	800	4
— Scanderoon to Buassora,.....	1349	12
— Buassora to Bombay,.....	1587	8
Necessary or incidental delays,.....	—	3½
	<hr/> 6036	<hr/> 42½

The other route is by the Red Sea, the advantages and practicability of which have been advocated by Captain Head. The only physical point on which there seems to be any doubt or difference of opinion is the overland conveyance between Egypt and the Arabian Gulf. Suez and Cosseij are certainly the most favourable ports; but the former has the disadvantage of shallow water, while the other would occasion a delay of ten or twelve days in ascending the Nile to Keneh, and crossing the intervening desert. The following is the calculation as to time and distance by this line of conveyance:—

	Miles.	Days.
From Falmouth to Malta,.....	2040	16
— Malta to Alexandria,.....	860	5
— Alexandria to Suez (by Cairo),.....	175	6
— Suez to Bab el Mandeh,.....	1200	7
— Bab el Mandeh to Socotra,.....	600	4
— Socotra to Bombay,.....	1200	7
	<hr/> 6075	<hr/> 45

The most formidable impediment in the way of this project, as we have already stated (vol. i. p. 86), is the article of expense, which has been estimated at £40,000 or £50,000 per annum, if the communication is made monthly. But though in abeyance

in the mean time, it is highly probable that the plan will be carried into effect.\* The changes at present contemplated in the government and policy of India will render it of vast importance to establish a shorter and cheaper line of intercourse than by the Cape of Good Hope; and perhaps the period is not very remote when the commerce of the East will resume its ancient channel, and the great trading capitals of Europe and Asia be brought, by the marvellous agency of steam, within a few days' journey of each other.

The population of Arabia cannot, perhaps, be very accurately ascertained. In the towns and districts belonging to Nejed, Mengin reckons 50,945 males, and 231,020 women and children. Its whole military force consisted of 41,100 infantry and 8620 cavalry. The population of Hejaz, Burckhardt computed at 150,000, the greater proportion of which are Harb Bedouins. The territory of Sinai, south of a line drawn from Suez to Akaba, he supposed might contain nearly 4000; but the number diminishes in years when pasturage is scarce. Yemen is reckoned to have about a million of inhabitants, most of whom belong to the sect of the Zeidites. The entire population of the Arabian peninsula, Head states at 11,000,000; Malte Brun thinks it may probably amount to 12,000,000; a number which, if united by a system of regular government and acting under one political head, might prove a formidable enemy to the countries once overrun by their warlike ancestors. That this vast region was anciently more rich and populous than it is now there is undeniable evidence in its own deserts. The tribes on the northern frontiers, in the days of the Hebrew

---

\* Captain Head estimates that a monthly voyage would leave a balance of no less than £52,486 of annual profits.

judges, are represented as coming up and encamping against Israel, with their camels, their cattle, and their tents, like grasshoppers for multitude. The plains of Hauran are strewn with the ruins of towns and villages ; and many places which are susceptible of culture, and must once have been thickly peopled, are overgrown with wild herbage. It may even be doubted whether these regions have always existed in the same state of hopeless sterility which they at present exhibit. Numbers of petrified trunks have been discovered in desolate tracts, where neither tree nor shrub has grown within the remembrance of history ; but of the same species—the date and the sycamore—which still abound in the more fertile parts of the same district. These facts seem to demonstrate a more flourishing condition of soil and population in certain places than are now witnessed by modern travellers, but at a period of which antiquity is silent.

In casting a retrospective view over the manners and habits of the Arabs, we are struck with the contradictory features which they discover, both in their social and moral character. Independently of the grand distinction between natives and settlers, shepherds and citizens, which naturally creates a difference in their modes of life, other anomalous circumstances are found to exist among the pure aboriginal tribes. The spirit of patriotism among them is strong and universal, yet they have no home but the pathless waste and wretched tent. They are a nation of brothers, yet live continually at war ; jealous of their honour, and at the same time addicted to the meanest vices. Though fierce and sanguinary in their temper, they are not strangers to the virtues of pity and gratitude. They are

faithful where they pledge their word,<sup>6</sup> and charitable to the needy ; but they are covetous, and by no means of good faith in pecuniary transactions.

Their religious character is marked by the same irreconcilable extremes. Their fanaticism is coupled with infidelity ; their prayers and devotions are mingled with the pursuits of commerce and the ideas of worldly lucre. Islam has but very little hold on the reverence of its disciples, even under the domes of its own temples. In the desert there is a still more lax observance of its precepts and ceremonies. In a pleasant indifference about the matter, the Bedouins remark that the religion of Mohammed never could have been intended for them. " In the desert," say they, " we have no water ; how then can we make the prescribed ablutions ? We have no money ; and how can we bestow alms ? Why should we fast in the Ramādan, since the whole year with us is one continual abstinence ; and if God be present every where, why should we go to Mecca to adore him ?" The whole of their social and moral economy remarkably illustrates the truths of Holy Writ, that " Ishmael shall be a wild man, whose hand is against every man, and every man's hand against him." Enemies alike to industry and the arts, they dwell " without bolts and bars," the wandering denizens of the wilderness. Religiously opposed to the luxuries and refinements of civilized life, these rude barbarians present the phenomenon of a people living in a state of nature, unsubdued and unchanged ; yet, in their acknowledgment of the true God, still preserving evidence of their lineage as the children of Abraham.

## CHAPTER IX.

*Natural History of Arabia.*

Want of Information on the Natural History of Arabia—Scientific Discoveries of the Danish Travellers—GEOLOGY—Mount Sinai—Hills of Hejaz and Yemen—Volcanic Rocks—Hot Springs—SOIL—Agriculture—Crops—Harvest—Comparative Fertility of different Districts—MINERALOGY—No Gold or Silver Mines in Arabia—Precious Stones—BOTANY—Vegetables—Plants—Coloquintida—Tobacco—Hemp—TREES AND SHRUBS—Fruit-trees—The Palm—Date-groves—Manna—Gum-Arabic—Honey—SHRUBS—The Nebek—Tamarisk—Balsam of Mecca—The Gharkad—Henna—Acacia—Incense-tree—Coffee—ZOOLOGY—Wild Animals—Hyenas—Monkeys—Rock-goats—Hares—Jerboas—Domestic Animals—Cows—Buffaloes—Asses—Horses—Camels—Dromedaries—Sheep—Goats—Dogs—Mice—Birds—Poultry—Birds of Game—Birds of Prey—The Ostrich—The Lapwing—The Samarman—Field-sports of the Arabs—Reptiles—Tortoises—Scorpions—Serpents—Fish—Insects—The Locust—Ants—Tenebriones—Shells—Coral Banks.

As few travellers comparatively have visited Arabia, it cannot be supposed that its Natural History has been very minutely investigated. The knowledge of the ancients on this subject was extremely imperfect, consisting chiefly of fabulous or exaggerated reports as to some of the more celebrated of its mineral and vegetable productions. Several useful observations, not indeed referring peculiarly to that country, occur in the works of Kæmpfer, Bochart, Norden, Belon, Pauw, Rauwolf, and Tournefort. Shaw and Hasselquist were both distinguished for their attainments in physical science; but the reader will look in vain in their works for that systematic arrangement or accuracy of description which modern philology has introduced into every department of natural knowledge. It is to the Danish travellers, Niebuhr and his companions, who have done so much to illustrate the geography, manners, and civil institutions of Arabia, that we are indebted almost exclusively for whatever is known in Europe of its minerals, animals, and plants.

That literary expedition, which owed its formation to

the patronage of Frederick V. and his minister Count Bernstorff, sailed from Copenhagen in January 1761, and, after a short stay at Constantinople, reached the coast of Yemen, by way of Egypt, in December 1762. Each of the academicians who composed it had his particular task assigned him. Professor Von Haven was appointed linguist; Mons. Baurenfiend acted as draughtsman; Dr Cramer had the office of physician; Mons. Forskal was charged with the department of natural history; and Niebuhr with that of geography. The novelty of the undertaking excited a lively interest among the learned associations of Europe. A series of questions, embracing many intricate points both physical and philological, was proposed for solution by Michaelis, professor of theology at Göttingen. A similar list was drawn up and addressed to these accomplished travellers by M. de Brequigny of the Royal Academy of Inscriptions at Paris, with a view to obtain authentic information respecting the antiquities, chronology, government, religion, and language of Yemen. Of the historical treasures brought to light in the answers to these interrogatories we have not failed to avail ourselves in the preceding chapters of our work.

It is to be regretted, however, that, from a concurrence of unfavourable circumstances, the hopes of the scientific world were in a great measure frustrated. Von Haven died at Mocha within five months after their arrival. Forskal survived him but a few weeks, having expired at Jerim on the 11th of July; but not before he had visited Sanaa, and made various professional excursions among the Coffee Mountains near Taas. In the course of the following year Niebuhr lost his two remaining companions: Baurenfiend died at sea near the island of Socotra, and Cramer ended his days at Bombay. By this melancholy catastrophe numerous valuable discoveries were doubtless left unaccomplished; yet it is truly surprising how much was effected in so short a time by the ardent zeal and indefatigable industry of M. Forskal. He collected and gave descriptions of more than 300 species in the animal kingdom, and upwards of 800 in the vegetable; and this number might have been considerably increased had he not scrupulously adhered to the resolution of admitting nothing which he had not examined with the greatest care. These fragments were afterwards reduced to order by Niebuhr, according to the Linnæan arrangement, and

published in Latin in two quarto volumes.\* Owing to the rigour with which Christians were then excluded from the Holy Land of the Moslem, the observations of the Danish travellers were necessarily restricted to the southern provinces, and those parts of the country through which Niebuhr passed in his journey from Bagdad to Aleppo. Since that time Mohammedan bigotry has relaxed; but this tolerance has not much increased the information of naturalists; and a few geological remarks, gleaned from the pages of Burckhardt and Ali Bey, are all that have been added to the scientific treasures of the northern philosophers. In collecting and arranging the materials which we have drawn from these various sources, we have been less anxious to follow a particular system than to present the general reader with a simple and intelligible treatise on the subject.

#### SECTION I.—GEOLOGY.

*Mountains.*—It has been already stated in the description of Arabia, that the mountain-chain which traverses that peninsula from north to south is a continuation of Lebanon in Palestine. Passing eastward of the Dead Sea, it runs towards Akaba, and from thence extends as far as Yemen; in some places approaching the shore of the Arabian Gulf, and in others being separated from it by the intervening plain of Tehama. On the eastern side the descent of this range is less by one-third than on the western, owing perhaps to the constant accumulation of sand; so that the great central desert is considerably elevated above the level of the sea. The lofty summits, that tower to the clouds when viewed from the coast, dwindle into mere hills when seen from the interior. At Wady Arabah the surface of the western plain is perhaps 1000 feet lower than the eastern. The structure of Gebel Shera (Mount Seir) is principally of calcareous rock; there are also detached pieces of basalt, and large tracts of breccia, formed of sand and flint. About Mount Hor and Wady Moussa sandstone of a reddish colour prevails; and from this all the tombs and temples of Petra have been excavated. To the southward it follows the whole extent of the great valley. The summits of these cliffs are so irregular and

\* *Flora Arabica*, 4to, Hafniz, 1775. *Descriptiones Animalium*, Ibid. 1776.



grotesque, that when seen from a distance they have the appearance of volcanic mountains. Their naked perpendicular sides present calcareous rocks, sandstone, and flint, lying over each other in horizontal layers. In several parts of the caravan-route between Suez and Akaba, Burckhardt observed large insulated masses of porous tufwacke. The famous Gebel Mekkateb, or Written Mountain, is of sandstone; but at Wady Borak the formation changes to porphyry, alternating with strata of greenstone.

The peninsula of Sinai exhibits a considerable diversity of structures, differing in their ingredients from the ridges in other parts of Arabia. On approaching the central summits of the Sinai group, the traveller encounters abrupt cliffs of granite from 600 to 800 feet in height, whose surface is blackened by the sun. These precipices enclose the Holy Mountain on three sides, leaving for a passage a narrow defile about forty feet in breadth. The upper nucleus, including the rugged peaks of St Catherine, is composed almost entirely of granite. Among the lower ridges porphyry and greenstone begin to appear. In many places the latter takes the nature of slate. The layers of the former are sometimes very striking, running perpendicularly from the top to the base of the mountain in strata of about twelve feet in width, and projecting slightly from the other rocks. The porphyry of Sinai, Burckhardt remarks, is usually a red indurated argillaceous substance. Some specimens had the appearance of red felspar. In the argil are embedded small crystals of hornblende or of mica, and thin pieces of quartz, the colour of which is universally red. The granite is gray and of the small-grained species, of which the Towara tribes manufacture hand-mills, which they dispose of to the northern Arabs, or export for sale. The intervening valleys are interspersed with blocks of chalk-rock; on each side, beds of red or white sandstone present their smooth perpendicular surface.

Shaw remarks, that on the route betwixt Cairo and Suez an infinite number of flints and pebbles are to be met with, all of them superior to the Florentine marble, and frequently equal to the Mocha stone in the variety of their figures and representations, having the images of little trees, shrubs, or plants, impressed upon them,—and hence they have obtained the name of *dendrite* stones. The porphyry of Sinai and St Catherine is distinguished by

the same remarkable appearances,—a circumstance which has induced some naturalists to call it *marmor embuscatum*, or bushy marble. It was this singular feature that led Buxtorf to derive the name of *Sinai* from the *bushes* (the tamarisks and acacias) figured in the rocks; although it seems more natural that the appellation should have originated from the shrubs themselves, as they are known to abound in these deserts.\* Shaw noticed some branches of this fossil tamarisk that were nearly half an inch in diameter: the constituent matter appeared rather of a mineral substance, not unlike the powder of lead-ore, which crumbled into dust when touched or rubbed with the fingers. The porphyry, he says, is sometimes of so small and compact a grain that the contexture is not inferior to the *ophites* or serpentine marble; and he thought it probable, that out of this rock were hewn the two tables of the law on which the Ten Commandments were written with the finger of God.

On the shore towards Akaba rise numerous promontories of black trap and basalt, the bases of which have been scooped by the sea into creeks, resembling small lakes with very narrow entrances. Some of these cliffs, which run close by the water's edge for upwards of a mile, present granite and red porphyry crossing each other horizontally or perpendicularly in irregular layers. The granite of this peninsula exhibits the same numberless varieties, and the same beautiful specimens, of red, rose-coloured, and almost purple, that are to be found near Es Souan and above the cataract of the Nile. The transitions from primitive to secondary rocks, partaking of the nature of greenstone or graywacke, or hornstone and trap, present also an endless diversity, the description of which would only tire the patience of the reader. Om Shomar consists of granite: the lower stratum is red; at the top it is almost white, so as to appear from a distance like

---

\* *Sinai montis nomen a sine, rubus, quod lapides inventi in eo figuratum in se habuerint rubum, &c.* Buxtorf in voce 730. Other commentators say that *sine* also signifies a breast; and as Mounts Sinai and St Catherine are the highest peaks in that quarter, they might be so called from their likeness to that part of the human body; a derivation far less probable than the other. The dendritic appearance of these rocks is mentioned by Prospero Alpino (*Hist. Nat. Egypt.* cap. vi. p. 147), who speaks of the *stipites sylvestres*, in quibus lapidibus sylva, herbarum, fruticum, &c. pictæ imagines cernuntur."

chalk. This arises from the large portion of white felspar in it, and the minute particles of hornblende and mica. Towards the middle of the mountain and between the granite rocks are broad strata of brittle black slate, mixed with layers of quartz, felspar, and micaceous schistus. The quartz includes thin strata of mica of the most brilliant white colour, which is quite dazzling in the sun, and forms a striking contrast with the blackened surface of the slate and the red granite.

The hills that branch off from this great chain between Medina and Mecca differ little in their formation. Granite, both of the gray and red species, limestone, and porphyry, are the prevailing rocks. Ohud, famous for one of Mohammed's battles, consists of different-coloured granite. On its sides Burckhardt found flint, but no lava. Its entire extent from west to east is about four miles. The lowest range above Jidda, which is seldom more than 400 or 500 feet high, is calcareous; but the rock soon changes into gneiss and a species of granite, with schorl in the place of felspar, accompanied by masses of quartz and some mica. This formation continues with little variety as far as the vicinity of Gebel Nour, near Mecca, where granite begins. The mountains enclosing the valley of Muna are composed of variously-coloured granite, mixed in a few places with strata of greenstone, trap, and porphyry schistus. Although there are some beds of hornblende, felspar, mica, and schorl, to be found accidentally among them; yet, according to Ali Bey, quartz forms in general the principal masses. Their beds are oblique, and in different angles of declination, dipping westward from thirty to forty-five degrees. White marble is said to be found in the neighbourhood; and some travellers suppose that there is abundance of valuable minerals, which are only hid because the inhabitants want skill or enterprise to discover them.

The geological description of the country northward of Hejaz applies, with little variation, to the lofty chain that extends along the coast for nearly 1800 miles, from Mecca to Muscat; except that, in the ridge behind Tehama, schistus and basalt predominate, instead of granite. At Kahhme, near Beit el-Fakih, Niebuhr saw a hill composed entirely of pentagonal basaltic columns, each about eight inches in diameter, and so uniformly regular, that they might be mistaken for the work of art. They rise

vertically one over the other, sometimes spreading in parallel rows to a considerable extent. In different parts of Yemen, especially among the Coffee Mountains, similar phenomena were observed, which contributed greatly to the beauty of the landscape; particularly in the rainy season, when the water was seen rushing over their summits, and forming cascades, which had the appearance of being supported by rows of artificial pillars. These basalts were useful to the inhabitants, serving as materials for building steps to climb the hills where the ascent was difficult, and also as walls to support the plantations of coffee-trees on the steepest declivities. The mountains southward of Muscat, behind Ras el Hud, are chiefly of granite, and according to Captain Owen rise to the height of 6000 feet.

*Volcanic Rocks.*—The first and only appearance of volcanic action which Burckhardt detected in the peninsula of Sinai was on the coast near Sherm. For a distance of about two miles the hills presented perpendicular cliffs from sixty to eighty feet in height, some of them nearly circular, others semicircular. The rocks were black, slightly tinged with red, of a sough surface, and full of cavities. In other places there was an appearance of volcanic craters. No traces of lava were observed towards the higher mountains, which seemed to prove that the discharged matter was confined to that spot. The hills round Medina, as well as the lower ridge of the great northern chain, exhibit a layer of volcanic rock. It is of a bluish-black colour, very porous, yet heavy and hard, not glazed, and intermixed with small white substances of the size of a pin-head, but not crystallized. The whole plain is blackened by the debris, with which it is overspread. This traveller observed no lava, although the nature of the ground seemed strongly to indicate the neighbourhood of a volcano. The inhabitants gave him an account of an earthquake and a volcanic eruption, which took place there about the middle of the thirteenth century. They described it as bursting forth eastward of the town, with a smoke that completely darkened the sky; at the same time a fiery mass of immense size, resembling a large city with walls, battlements, and minarets, was seen ascending to heaven.\* The number of hot springs found at almost every station of the road to Mecca seems to authorize the conjecture that similar volcanoes have

existed in many other points of the mountain-ridge between Syria and Yemen. Ali Bey remarked seven groups of volcanic hills near Jedeida, which were entirely black, and had the appearance of very picturesque ruins. The islands of Kotembel and Gebel Tar, in the Red Sea, have been already noticed as exhibiting traces of eruptions now extinct; and travellers have remarked that the rocky peninsula on which Aden is situated resembles the fragment of a volcano, the crater of which is covered by the sea.\*

*Hot Springs.*—The fountains already mentioned, called *Ayoun Mousu* or the Wells of Moses, are lukewarm and sulphureous, boiling up three or four inches above the surface, as if they were agitated below by some violent heat. The water brings up the sand with it; yet the inhabitants about the place drink it in preference to the brackish springs near Suez. Pococke says, that the ground around them is like a quagmire, and dangerous if approached too near. Several of these springs appeared to be dried up: one only affords sweet water; but it is so often rendered muddy by the camels of the Arabs, that it is rarely fit to supply the wants of the thirsty traveller. The waters of *Hummam Faraoun* or Baths of Pharaoh, near Wady Gharendel, are extremely hot. Shaw was assured that an egg might be boiled hard in one minute; but he had no opportunity of making the experiment himself. These baths lie within a cavern or grotto in the rock, and have a low narrow entrance leading to them. "As soon as one enters this passage," says Pococke, "there is heat enough to make any body sweat very plentifully, and many people have died that have gone as far as the water, by a vapour that extinguishes the lights. The water runs through the rocks and sandbanks in a great number of little streams into the sea for a quarter of a mile, and it is even there exceedingly hot, and so are the stones, which are encrusted with a white substance, apparently of salt and sulphur." This traveller gives an analysis of the fluid, which was found to be impregnated with much earthy gross sulphur, a neutral salt, a small quantity of alum, but no vitriol. The taste is nauseous; but its virtues are much esteemed in cutaneous and nervous disorders, as also for removing sterility. The pa-

---

\* Vol. i. p. 72. \*Valentia's Travels, vol. ii. p. 38.

tients, male or female, who desire a family, have this fertilizing element copiously poured over them ; during forty days their sole food must be oil, honey, and bread baked without salt, and their drink water with dates steeped in it.

*Soil.*—Arabia presents great diversities of soil. In the highlands of Yemen its general character is clay mixed with sand ; but the conformation of those schistous hills is unfavourable to the growth of plants. They are usually so craggy and precipitous as to afford neither room nor aliment for vegetable productions ; the nutritive earth being continually washed down by the rains. This circumstance has also had the effect of rendering culture in these districts extremely difficult and expensive ; water must be supplied either from wells, or by terraces constructed along the sides of the mountains. The barren sands of Hejaz resemble pulverized quartz ; the calcareous stone from the hills is decomposed into a blackish earth, which in time becomes fit to bear coarse vegetables. The cultivable soil around Medina is clay, mixed with a good deal of chalk and sand, and is of a grayish-white colour. In other parts it consists of a yellow loam, and also of a substance resembling bole-earth ; of the latter, small conical pieces about one and a half inches long, dried in the sun and suspended on a piece of riband, are sold to the pilgrims, who carry them home in commemoration of a miracle said to have been performed by Mohammed, who cured several Bedouins of a fever by washing their bodies with water in which this earth had been dissolved. The plain of Tehama contains large strata of salt. Lord Valentia states, that in digging a well at Mocha Mr Pringle found the first eight feet to be the rubbish of buildings,—the next two of clay,—one of sea-mud and wreck,—six of broken madrepores, and eleven of sand and shells ; thus showing that, to the depth of twenty-eight feet, the earth was entirely composed of marine exuvie, with the exception of clay. Near the surface the water was highly mephitic ; lower down it became less brackish, and yielded only one per cent. of salt. The wadis are generally formed of alluvial depositions ; and are in consequence the most rich and beautiful spots in the peninsula.

The extreme variety of soils admits of a corresponding diversity in the modes of cultivation as well as in the kind and quantity of the crops produced. In the greater

part of Arabia agriculture may be said to be entirely unknown. In Yemen, where there is a settled government, husbandry is in a more prosperous condition than in Syria or Mesopotamia. Whole fields are cultivated like gardens. Great pains are taken in watering them, though the Arabs have not adopted the hydraulic machinery which is used by their neighbours in Egypt and India. Their plough is of a very rude construction. It is dragged over the ground in every direction by oxen, until the surface is sufficiently broken and loosened for the reception of the seed. On the banks of the Euphrates sometimes asses and mules are employed in this labour. Where the ground is hilly and not accessible to the plough it is dug by the hoe; and this implement is sometimes so large as to require the management of two men, one of whom presses it into the earth, while the other pulls it forward with a cord.

The crops most common in Arabia are wheat, barley, rice, millet, maize, dhourra, dokoun, and safra. The two latter yield small round yellow grains, which the Bedouins grind to flour, and subsist on during winter. No oats are sown in any part of Hejaz; but they grow in other districts of the country. There is great variation in the season both of sowing and reaping. In Nejed wheat and barley are sown in October and gathered in April. Rice is sown in June, and comes to maturity in September. The seedtime for dhourra, maize, dokoun, and safra, is May; and they are reaped in August. No rice is cultivated in Nejed owing to the aridity of the climate; but it grows abundantly in El Hassa, Oman, and Yemen, where nature has supplied the means of irrigation. In the Hauran, where there is plenty of water, the peasants sow winter and summer seeds; but where they have to depend entirely upon the rainy season nothing can be cultivated in summer. The first harvest is that of horse-beans at the end of April, of which vast tracts are sown; next comes the barley harvest, and the wheat towards the end of May. In abundant years this grain sells at fifty piastres the gharara, or about £2, 10s. for fifteen cwt. In the southern provinces there is a material change both as to the time and the relative produce of the harvest. At Muscat wheat and barley are sown in December, and reaped about the end of March; while dhourra is sown in August, and ripens in November. This difference of

seasons may be remarked even within the narrow extent of the province of Yemen. At Sanaa, Niebuhr observed that the barley was cut down on the 15th of July, while the inhabitants of the neighbouring mountains were occupied in sowing their pulse and lentils. In the plain of Beit el Fakih the dhourra was seven feet high in the beginning of August; and at the same time the peasants in the valley of Zebid, distant only a very short day's journey, were ploughing and watering their fields for a second crop. Along the banks of the Euphrates barley is cut early in May, and wheat about six weeks later. All kinds of grain ripen at Bagdad twenty-four days sooner than at Mosul. This singular diversity of season is nowhere more remarkable than in the districts bordering on Syria. Burckhardt observed, that while the Hauran was every where covered with the richest verdure of wild herbage every plant in Wady Ghor was already dried up. To the north Gebel Sheik was covered with snow; to the east the fertile plains of Jolan were clothed in the blossoms of spring; while towards the south the withered vegetation indicated the effect of a tropical sun.

The usual mode of sowing is with the hand: the seed is then covered with the plough or with a large rake, and watered every ten days, either by manual labour or with the aid of a simple machine, called *mahalah*, placed over the mouth of a well furnished with buckets, and wrought by asses or oxen. The Arabs use a small quantity of seed: they are disposed to trust in the bounty of Heaven and the regularity of the seasons, rather than lose a superfluous particle. In some districts of Yemen, maize, dhourra, and lentils, are planted with the hand in furrows or drills; and these crops Niebuhr represents as the finest and most luxuriant he had ever seen. As the planter went on he covered the grain by pushing in the mould with his feet on both sides. In other places he followed the ploughman, who in his turn covered the seed by coming back upon the same furrow;—a method which, though economical, must be exceedingly troublesome. Noxious weeds are rooted out with the hand while the corn is in the blade; and sometimes this operation is performed by a small plough, to which the oxen are so yoked that they pass between the rows without injuring the plants, even when these are eight or ten inches high. For preserving the young crops the peasants watch their fields by turns, to



drive away birds and granivorous animals. In the highlands of Yemen the cornherd seats himself on a tree; in Tehama a sort of scaffold is raised, having a roof or awning spread over it. They are not, however, all equally careful; and Niebuhr remarks, that he passed fields between Mofhak and Sanaa very irregularly sown, and overrun with cockle-weeds.

In Nejed reaping is performed with the sickle; but in Yemen the ripe grain is pulled up by the roots;—the instrument being only used in cutting grass or other forage for cattle. Like the Indians the Arabs have a simple method of sharpening this implement by rubbing the blade with moistened sand. In thrashing their corn they have made no advance beyond the ancient and patriarchal fashion of which we read in the books of Moses. The sheaves are laid down on the floor in a certain order, and over them eight or ten oxen, fastened to an upright post in the centre, are driven, until the grain is completely separated from the ear. The straw is removed with pitchforks, and preserved as food for horses and cattle. In Yemen this operation is performed by two oxen dragging a large stone over the sheaves; and in the Hauran a heavy plank is used for the same purpose. Corn of all kinds is cleared from the chaff by being thrown up against the wind with a shovel (the *fan* of the sacred writers), and then passed through a sieve; after which it is ready for the process of grinding.

Travellers have remarked a very great difference with regard to the comparative increase of certain crops, and the productive powers of the soil. In Oman, according to Niebuhr, wheat yields ten to one; while in the best-cultivated lands of Yemen it gives a return of fifty fold. In the vicinity of Bessora and Bagdad the increase seldom exceeds twenty to one; at Mosul it varies from ten to fifteen; and in Diarbekir the ordinary wheat-crop produces from four to fifteen fold. In the Hauran this grain yields in middling years twenty-five, and in good seasons one hundred and twenty fold; while barley gives fifty, and in some instances eighty fold. But the corn of those districts which are watered solely from the clouds is of better quality, and produces more flour than what is grown on fields irrigated by artificial means: hence a return of fifteen in Syria is reckoned more than equivalent to twenty fold in Mesopotamia. A government-tax of

ten per cent. on all grain is levied in Nejed ; but where the labour of irrigation is required this impost is reduced one-half, in consideration of the additional expense. Of all kinds of grain dhourra is the most productive. On the hills of Yemen it gives a return of 140 ; and in Tehama, where the inhabitants reap three successive crops from the same field in the same year, this increase varies from 200 to 400 ;—an exuberance that appears almost incredible, but which is chiefly owing to their mode of sowing and their industrious irrigation. As this grain forms the staple article of food, not only in Arabia but in other Eastern countries, its extraordinary fertility must be regarded as one of those benevolent arrangements of Providence, whose economy is adapted with such exquisite wisdom to the wants and circumstances of man in all climates and in every region of the earth.

---

#### SECTION II.—MINERALOGY.

We have noticed elsewhere, that the mineral treasures, ascribed by the ancients to Arabia, have almost entirely vanished ; although the positive and unanimous testimony both of the Greek and Latin Authors will not permit us to doubt as to the fact of the wealth formerly drawn from the veins of Yemen. We have the authority of Niebuhr, that the precious metals are not found or known to exist in Arabia, which has no mines either of gold or silver. The rivulets no longer wash down the yellow grains from the hills ; nor do their sands exhibit any trace of so rich an intermixture. All the gold circulating in that country comes from Abyssinia or Europe, and is generally received in payment for coffee or other merchandise. When the Imam of Sanaa last century attempted to introduce a gold currency, he was obliged to melt down foreign money (Venetian sequins) for the purpose. There are still enthusiasts in alchymy who pretend to know the art of transmuting metals, and imagine themselves sure of success could they but discover a certain herb, called *haschischet el dab*, which gilds the teeth and gives a yellow colour to the flesh of the sheep and goats that eat it. At Beit el Fakh the Danish travellers found two alchymists who had ruined themselves by their researches into the mystery of gold-making ; and they mention a philosopher of Loheia, who endeavoured to per-

suade them that mines of that precious article were known to him, and to nobody else ;—an assertion to which they paid not the slightest credit.

No veins of silver are known to exist ; but a small quantity of that metal is extracted from the rich lead-mines in Oman. As the lead of that province is extremely fusible, the inhabitants export it in great abundance ; and it forms an article of considerable traffic from the port of Muscat. In Wady Oah near Sinai the Arabs collect native cinnabar, which is usually found in small pieces about the size of a pigeon's egg. It is very seldom crystallized, though there are sometimes nodules on the surface. The fracture is in perpendicular fibres ; and it stains the fingers of a dark colour.

Of precious stones, strictly so called, Niebuhr could learn nothing ; and he supposes that in ancient times they must have been all imported from India. Though the onyx is common in Yemen, especially between Taas and Mount Sumarra, he did not think it probable that the emerald was indigenous. There is a hill that bears this name, but it is on the Egyptian side of the Gulf, and forms part of that large chain of granitic mountains that runs parallel with the Red Sea. The agate, called the *Mocha stone*, comes from Surat, and the finest carnelions are brought from the Gulf of Cambay. The *smaragdus cholor*, or inferior emerald, which according to Pliny was used in building to ornament the walls of houses, was probably diallage ; and some writers (Malte Brun) have conjectured that the *aromatites*, or aromatic stone of the ancients, was asuber. In a mountain near Damar is found a stone which the Arabs call *ayek yemani*, and which they hold in the highest estimation. It is of a red or rather a light-brown colour, and seems to be a carnelion. The natives set it in rings or bracelets, and ascribe to it the talismanic virtue of healing wounds, and stanching blood when instantly applied. The topaz belongs to Arabia, and derived its name, according to Pliny, from the island Topazos (now called Zemorgët) in the Red Sea. He also mentions Cytes, another islet where good specimens were found.

Stones of less value are by no means rare. In the neighbourhood of Loheia, the Danish travellers found a bluish gypsum, a gray schistus, and spheroidal marcasites, in beds of grit-stone, which are used in building. Near

Kahhme they saw a ferruginous spar, mixed with brown and white selenite, almost transparent. The dark granitic rocks of Sinai contain jasper, amethyst, and syenite; magnets are frequently to be met with in the province of Kusma; and at Saade there are iron-mines which are still worked. Particles of this ore are also to be found among the sands that are washed down from the hills by the rain. It was the belief of the ancients that Arabia was entirely destitute of iron; but this opinion proves to be unfounded. Niebuhr confesses, however, that it is coarse and brittle; and, from the scarcity of wood, it sells at a higher price than that which is imported from other countries.

At Loheia, and near the isle of Kameran, to the north of Hodeida, there are hills consisting almost entirely of fossil salt. These masses are piled up in large transparent strata, and enclosed in a crust of calcareous stone. The Arabs formerly wrought these mines; but the galleries have been allowed to sink down, although a considerable quantity of that article is still quarried in the neighbourhood.\* Burckhardt states, that rock-salt is found in the mountains south of the Dead Sea, and in the sandstone strata in Wady Romman, near Gebel Mekkateh. Oman possesses copper-mines; and in the neighbourhood of Mecca Ali Bey observed some veins of sulphur that were open. In the northern Ghor, pieces of native sulphur are discovered at a small depth beneath the surface, which are used by the Bedouins for curing diseases in their camels. Shaw was of opinion that lead-mines existed near Sinai.

The Arabs, in general, still believe in the foolish old superstitions respecting their gems and precious stones; and are more apt to wonder at their miraculous virtues than to turn them to account in the way of commerce. In ancient times they were used as antidotes, to which the wearer piously ascribed his safety when surrounded with invisible danger. Among other absurdities, it is recorded of the Caliph Soliman that he wore constantly round his arm a bracelet composed of ten of these magical stones, which never failed to strike one against the other, and make a slight noise when any poison was near.† The carbuncle was believed to possess many wonderful qualities. It was supposed to be an animal substance formed

---

\* Capt. Head's Journey, p. 7.

† Marigny, Hist. des Arabes tome ii.

in the serpent, which had a most ingenious method of preserving it from the song of the charmer. The distinction of sex was also ascribed to it; the females threw out their radiance, while the males appeared within like brilliant and burning stars.\*

It was customary with the Arabian physicians, during

\* The historian De Thou mentions a marvellous carbuncle that was brought by an Eastern merchant to Bologna. Among its surprising properties, he states "that being most impatient of the earth, if it was confined it would force its way, and immediately fly aloft. Certain shape it had none, for its figure was inconstant, and momentarily changing; and though at a distance it was beautiful to the eye, it would not suffer itself to be handled with impunity, but hurt those who obstinately struggled with it, as many persons, before many spectators, experienced. If by chance any part of it was broken off, for it was not very hard, it became nothing less."—*Thuanus*, lib. viii. ix.—Besides the power of charming against spells, some of them were believed to have the virtue of rendering their possessor invisible or invulnerable, of enabling him to see through rocks, and to discover hidden treasures. Of their medicinal properties, we are told that the amethyst could remove the effects of intoxication; "for being bound on the navel, it restrains the vapours of the wine, and so dissolves the inebriety." The *borax* or *crapondinus* was reckoned of unfailing efficacy in poisons. It was said to be extracted from a dead toad, and described as of a black or dun colour, with a cerulean glow, having in the middle the similitude of an eye. The *kinocleus* was employed to cast out devils; and the *corvina*, a stone of a reddish colour, found in crows' nests, was supposed to make boiled or addled eggs fresh and prolific; besides having the virtue "to increase riches, bestow honours, and foretell many future events." The *alectoria*, a stone of a darkish crystalline colour, was said to be found in the intestines of capons that had lived seven years. Its size was no bigger than a bean; but its qualities are represented as of a very potent and miscellaneous nature. "It could render the person who carried it invisible; being held in the mouth it allays thirst, and therefore is proper for wrestlers; it makes a wife agreeable to her husband; bestows honours, and preserves those already acquired; it frees such as are bewitched; it renders a man eloquent, constant, and amiable; it helps to regain a lost kingdom and acquire a foreign wife."—*Mirror of Stones*.—"In the country called Panten or Tathalamasin, there be canes, called cassan, which overspread the earth like grasse, and out of every knot of them spring forth certaine branches, which are continued upon the ground almost for the space of a mile. In the sayd canes there are found certaine stones, one of which stones whosoever carryeth about with him cannot be wounded with any yron; and by the vertue of these stones, the people aforesaid doe for the most part triumph both on sea and land."—*Odoricus in Hakheytt*. This evidently refers to the *Tabasheer*, a siliceous substance found in the joints of the bamboo, and to which great virtues are attributed in India.

the highest era of Saracen learning, to administer precious stones in the way of medicine, as remedies for certain diseases; but their miraculous properties have been long since exploded. It is now generally admitted, as has been already observed, that the greater part of the gems, jewels, and precious metals, with which the ancient Hamyarites embellished their cities, temples, and palaces, were obtained from the Indians, Persians, and Romans, in exchange for the spices and perfumes which they imported from the Happy Arabia.

### SECTION III.—BOTANY.

Throughout the greater part of Arabia neither the soil nor the climate is favourable to vegetation; the botany of such a country cannot therefore be either varied or extensive. The heat of the sun is so intense, that the flowers no sooner blow than they are withered; so that the naturalist is not only circumscribed as to the number of plants, but limited as to the proper time for observation; and if he miss the particular moment in examining certain species when they are in bloom, he can have no subsequent opportunity until another season. Besides these physical inconveniences there are others arising from the character of the inhabitants. The Arabs, who are an ignorant, jealous, and avaricious people, cannot comprehend how foreigners should be prompted by mere curiosity, or a love of science, to expose themselves to so much danger and fatigue; hence the idea prevalent among them is, that Europeans are attracted by motives of interest and the desire of discovering hidden treasures, either in their mountains or among the ruins of ancient cities. This belief operates strongly against scientific investigations; as travellers are exposed to the risk of being plundered or murdered, on account of the imaginary wealth which they are supposed to possess. In Yemen there is less of this prejudice, and consequently less interruption, than in other provinces.\*

\* Much was anticipated from the talents and attainments of Seetzen, who expected to make several discoveries in the mineral as well as in the animal and vegetable productions of the country; but the hopes of the scientific world were disappointed by his premature death at Akaba (supposed by poison). A short correspondence between him and M. de Zach of Saxe Gotha was translated and printed in 1810 by the Palestine Association.

There are in Arabia a considerable number of vegetable productions common to other regions, both of a colder and a warmer climate. In the highlands, plants grow which are found in the northern parts of Europe; while in the plains and valleys may be seen species that are to be met with in India and Africa, and which have probably been introduced by settlers from these countries. Niebuhr has remarked, however, that where there are in Europe various species of any genus of plants, the Arabian species of the same genus are almost all new; while no such diversity is observed in those which are common to Arabia with India. So little known were the indigenous plants of Yemen, that Forskal was obliged to form no less than thirty new genera, besides a variety of doubtful species which he could hardly venture to include under any generic arrangement. Of the 800 specimens which he has described, it is unnecessary for our purpose to do more than allude to a few that may be considered remarkable for their novelty or their usefulness.

*Vegetables.*—The Arabs cultivate several pot-herbs that are common in our gardens,—such as carrots, turnips, beans, onions, leeks, garlic, asparagus, beet, spinach, lettuce, a very delicate purslain with sharp leaves, & sort of radish of which the leaves only are eaten, water-cresses, besides an immense variety of gourds, cucumbers, pumpkins, and melons; of the two latter there is a sort that grows wild in the woods, and serves for feeding camels. The proper melons are reared in the fields, and in such abundance that the natives of all ranks use them for some part of the year as their chief article of food. When nearly ripe the fruit is pierced into the pulp; this aperture is then stopped with wax, and the melon left upon the stalk. By means of this simple process, the pulp in a few days is converted into a delicious liquor. Of Indian vegetables naturalized in Arabia, Forskal enumerates a *Sida* and *Hibiscus*, resembling our mallows; a *Jussiaea*, the *Betel*, a beautiful species of *Acanthus*, and *Bunias* somewhat like our cabbages, the leaves of which are eaten boiled. There are other Indian plants which the Arabs eat raw by way of salad; a *Stapelia*, a *Cleome* not unlike mustard; a *Dolichos* and *Glycyne*, resembling French beans, are very common in Yemen, and so beautiful when ripe that they are strung into necklaces and bracelets, which are highly esteemed. There are some culinary vegetables that require no cul-

ture, such as the *Corchorus*, the *Solanthus*, the leaves of which, when boiled, have a pleasing acid taste; and the celebrated *Colocasia* (a species of *Arum*), which flourishes abundantly in all marshy places.

*Plants.*—Of these the variety is not great; and they are chiefly of the saline or succulent kind. The sandy plains produce the same genera as Northern Africa, which serve as agreeable objects to the traveller, as well as to alleviate the thirst of the camel in the weary journeys of the caravans through the desert. Different kinds of *Zygophyllum*, *Hedysarum*, *Colutea*, *Mesembryanthemum*, *Salsola*, with other prickly herbs and shrubs, are browsed by these animals, which are content with the driest and hardest fare. The ass eats a species of the *Scorzonera*, so rough and bitter that even the camel refuses to taste it. There is a species of *Mesembryanthemum*, the grain of which the Bedouins prepare into a sort of bread, and eat it as readily as if it were made of wheat. It is in the wadis and recesses of the mountains that Arabian botany ought to be studied; and here, as Burckhardt remarks of the Sinai group, the naturalist would find a rich harvest. He mentions in particular the *tattar* (*Ocimum tatarhendi*), as affording the best possible food for sheep; and the *noonfun* (the *Euphorbia retusa* of Forskal), bearing a pretty red flower, which abounds in these valleys, and is seen among the cliffs of the most barren granitic rocks. The monks of St Catherine collect various herbs when in full bloom, which they dry and send to their archbishop, who distributes them to his friends and dependants, as they are supposed to possess many virtues conducive to health. This barren peninsula is the favourite soil of the rose of Jericho, an *Apocynum* or dog's-bane, the *Absinthium santonicum judaicum*, the *Asteriscus trianthophorus*, *Astragalus perennis*, and several others, which Shaw has enumerated in his "*Specimen Phytographiæ*." The *Ocimum*, the most beautiful species of the *Basilic*, is much valued for its perfume, as are also an *Inula*, a sort of elecampane, a *Cacalia* from the heart of Africa; and the genus *Dianthera*, of which Forskal discovered eight species. The same traveller gave the name of *Moscharia* to a plant of a new genus, on account of its musky smell. Among the odoriferous herbs of which he collected specimens were lavender, marjoram, lilies, and pinks. The most fragrant, as well as the most remarkable for their fine flowers, were



those common to India and Arabia, such as an *Ipomœa*, resembling the rope-weed ; a *Pancraticum*, with a flower of the purest white, which he called the sea-daffodil, and a species of *Hibiscus*, whose flower is singularly large, and of the brightest red colour. The Arabs are by no means indifferent to the beauties of Flora, as the peasants in many parts retain the ancient custom of crowning themselves on festive occasions with chaplets and garlands.

There are certain plants used for purposes of domestic economy, while others are universally esteemed for their medicinal qualities. A mean-looking herb like orache is mentioned by Forskal, and ranked by him as a distinct genus by the name of *Suaeda*, which affords abundance of an alkaline salt excellent for whitening linen, and employed instead of soap by the common people. Burckhardt states, that the Bedouins of Wady Genne, near Sinai, use for the same purpose the herb *ajrem*, which they dry and pound between two stones. In the same valley he found several people occupied in collecting shrubs, which they burn into charcoal for the Cairo market. The thick roots of the *rethern* (the *Genista ratan* of Forskal), which grows there in great plenty, is the kind they prefer. For its well-known properties in dyeing, the indigo-shrub (*Indigofera*, Linn.) is universally cultivated here, blue being the favourite colour of the Arabs. We are told, that when this plant happens to be scarce the natives contrive to extract indigo from a species of *Polygala*. The common *kali* (*Salsola kali*, Linn.) grows in great abundance on the coasts and in the islands of the Red Sea. There is one plant which, though not a native of Arabia, deserves to be noticed, as it serves a very important economical purpose both in that country and in Egypt. It is a gray-coloured herb, called *schæbe*, an infusion of which, mixed with a certain quantity of meal, forms a leaven for the fermentation both of bread and beer. This is considered essential to the process of brewing, and it communicates an agreeable taste to the liquor. Upon examining this herb, Forskal found it to be a *lichen* of the plum-tree, of which several shiploads were then annually imported from the Archipelago into Alexandria. Among the new genera discovered by the Danish botanist, several were distinguished for their curious properties. The *Polycephalus suaveolens*, which resembles the thistle, has at a distance the appearance of a heap of loose balls, each of which encloses

a bunch of flowers. The *Nerium obscurum*, a sort of laurel-rose, is remarkable for a singular bulb close to the earth about the size of a man's head, which forms all its trunk, and out of which the branches spring. The *Volutella aphylla* (*Cassyta filiformis*, Linn.) appears like a long slender thread, without root or leaves, which entwines itself about trees. It bears, however, a sort of flower, and berries which are eaten by children. The *caydveja* (called *Forskalea* by Linnæus, in honour of its discoverer) grows in the driest parts of the country. It has small feelers, with which it fixes itself so tenaciously upon soft or smooth substances, that it must be torn in pieces before it can be removed.

Arundinaceous plants are necessarily limited to certain districts. In most parts of Yemen, a sort of panick-grass or bulrush (*Panicum* and *Scirpus*, Linn.) is used in roofing houses; and as rains are not frequent, these slender coverings are found to be sufficient. There is a particular sort of rush on the borders of the Red Sea, of which the natives work carpets so fine that they are exported to other countries, even as far as Constantinople, and form a considerable branch of trade. There is also a species of field-reed, which rises to the gigantic height of twenty-four feet, and is found in great abundance in the district of Ghobebe, near Suez. It is an article of commerce, being exported to Yemen, where it is used in the ceiling of houses. In the same neighbourhood Niebuhr was surprised to see a *Conserva* growing at the bottom of the Hammam Faraan, the temperature of which was at  $142\frac{1}{4}^{\circ}$  of Fahrenheit's scale. That the sugar-cane was from a very early period cultivated in Yemen has been already noticed.\* When the Arabs conquered Spain and the Mediterranean islands they introduced it among their other improvements. The experiment succeeded; and in Sicily the duty imposed on its exportation produced a very large revenue to the government. The ancient records of Calabria inform us that seven villages were entirely employed in this commerce. With the Portuguese discoveries the Indian cane travelled to America, where its extensive plantations so lowered the price of sugar that it became impossible to support a competition; in consequence of which its cultivation was gradually abandoned.

---

\* Pliny mentions it. "Saccharon et Arabia fert, sed laudatius India." Lib. xii. cap. 17.

*Medicinal Plants.*—Vegetables were evidently the first medicines ; and among all primitive nations a traditionary knowledge of their virtues has been preserved. The Arabs used them with a wonderful degree of success, though the greater part of these simple remedies is a mystery to strangers. It is unnecessary to describe plants belonging to such well-known genera as *Aloe* and *Euphorbia* ; of the latter the species are exceedingly numerous in Arabia. In hot countries infested with venomous animals, the inhabitants learn from experience what plants are salutary to man by operating as counter-poisons ; among the Arabs these from time immemorial have been held in the greatest esteem. They appear, however, according to Forskal, to be ignorant of the properties of the *Ophiorrhiza* (serpent-root) which is very common on their hills ; but they highly value the evergreen *Aristolochia*, which they consider not only as a remedy, but a preservative against the bite of serpents. Whoever drinks a decoction of this herb six weeks successively is fortified, in their opinion, against all future danger from these noxious reptiles. It is not improbable that jugglers, who in the East expose themselves so daringly to be bitten by serpents, have recourse to some such artificial protection. The prickly caper is reckoned an excellent antidote against all kinds of poisons. Senna (*Cassia Senna*, Linn.) and other sorts of cassia, are prescribed in various diseases. *Cassia fistula* or black-cassia, is reckoned by the Arabian physicians the best cure for cholera morbus, and other affections of a similar nature, which in warm climates are peculiarly dangerous. Though its favourite soil seems to be Upper Egypt, it abounds on the opposite side of the Red Sea. That which we call Senna of Alexandria grows in the territory of Abu-Arish ; the natives sell it at Mecca and Jidda, whence it passes by way of Egypt to the Mediterranean ports. There are several species ; and judging from the differently-shaped leaves, it would seem that what is imported into Europe is not all the produce of the same plant. The Bedouins of Sinai use coloquintida, which abounds in all the wadis of that peninsula, in syphilitic complaints. They fill the bulb with camel's milk, roast it over the fire, and then administer to the patient the contents thus impregnated with the essence of the fruit. They likewise manufacture it into tinder, which is done by the following process. After roasting the root in the ashes, they wrap it in a wetted rag of cotton cloth ;

it is then pounded between two stones ; and by this means the juice is expressed and absorbed by the cloth, which imbibes a tint of a dirty blue colour. The rag, when dried in the sun, ignites with the slightest spark of fire.

In the same districts tobacco is raised in considerable quantities, and forms a profitable branch of traffic. The Towara tribes are all great consumers of this luxury ; and whether they smoke or chew, they always mix it with natron or salt. They draw their chief supply from Wady Feiran, where its quality is very strong, and of the same species as that grown on the other mountains of Petraa, near Wady Mousa and Korek, which retains its green colour even when dry. Such is the currency which this commodity has acquired in trade, that the *moud*, or measure of tobacco, forms the standard by which the Tebna Arabs buy and sell minor articles among themselves.\* Hemp, as has been already observed, is cultivated and used as a narcotic over all Arabia. The flowers, or small leaves surrounding the seed, when mixed with tobacco, are called *hashish* ; and with this the common people fill their pipes. The higher classes eat it in a jelly or paste called *maajoun*, and made in the following manner :—A quantity of the leaves is boiled with butter for several hours, and then put under a press until the juice exudes, which is mixed with honey and other sweet drugs, and publicly exposed for sale in shops kept for the purpose. The hashish paste is politely termed *bast* (cheerfulness), and the venders of it are called *basti*, or cheerful-makers.\* It exhilarates the spirits, and excites the imagination as powerfully as opium. Many persons of the first rank use it in one shape or other ; and there are some who mix with it seeds of the benj, which is brought from Syria.

---

#### SECTION IV.—TREES AND SHRUBS.

Forests are neither common nor extensive in Arabia ; they are only to be seen in the wadis, and where the hills retain enough of earth for vegetation. In general, how-

---

\* A moud, according to Burckhardt, is equal to 16 or 19 lbs. English ; 3½ rotolo (about 5½ lbs. each) make a moud, and 80 mouds are a gharara. The rotolo or pound of Mecca contains 1.44 drachms ; at Jidda it is nearly double. The erdeb is equivalent to about 15 English bushels. At Mecca it is divided into 50 *keule* of measures, and at Medina into 96.

ever, trees are either absolutely unknown, or at least different from those of the same genera and species in Europe. As the interior has been little explored by travellers, it is not surprising that we should remain comparatively ignorant of its indigenous productions. But from what Forskal accomplished in his hasty excursion, it would appear that Yemen possesses a great variety of trees, as these alone comprehend more than half of the new genera proposed by that naturalist. He likewise enumerates eighteen others which he saw, but whose genus he had no opportunity of ascertaining. Of most of these he merely learned the Arabic names and a few of their properties. *Noeman*, a native of the Coffee Mountains, is often confounded with the cassia-tree. *Baku* and *anas* are common in the hills; their juice is narcotic and poisonous. *Schamama* bears a fruit that tastes and smells like a lemon; *gharib el bahe* abounds in Abu-Arish, and distils an agreeable substance, of which the birds appeared to be particularly fond. *Segley*, in the same district, bears leaves, the sap of which when expressed is esteemed an excellent remedy in cases of weak sight. In Yemen Forskal saw two trees, one of which resembled the lemon, and the other the apple-tree; but the inhabitants knew neither their names nor their qualities. The *sym el horat* (or poison of fishes) is the fruit of an unknown tree in Southern Arabia, and exported in considerable quantities. Fishes swallow it eagerly, after which they float in a state of seeming intoxication on the surface of the water, and are easily taken. Among the new genera described by the Danish traveller, and considered peculiar to Arabia, are the *katha*, *el kaya*, *keura*, and *onkoba*. The *katha*, which is improvable by cultivation, is commonly planted on the hills among the coffee-shrubs. The natives constantly chew the buds of this tree, which they call *kaad*, and to which they ascribe the virtues of assisting digestion, and of fortifying the constitution against infectious distempers. The taste, according to Niebuhr, is insipid, and the only effect he experienced from eating them was the interruption of sleep. The *kuera* and *el kaya* are celebrated for their perfume. The former bears some resemblance to the palm, and produces flowers of a rich and delicious odour. They are scarce, and draw a high price; but a small quantity, if preserved in a cool place, will continue for a long time to

diffuse its fragrance through a whole apartment. The latter is common on the hills of Yemen; the women steep its fruit in water, which they use for washing and perfuming the hair. The *onkoba* is a large tree, yielding an insipid fruit, which children eat. Of the *khadara*, the *antura*, and the *kulhamia*, we know nothing except that they are new species discovered by Forskal, and that their wood is used in building. The chestnut and sycamore grow to a gigantic size in Hejaz. The Arabs, however, have little timber suited for this purpose, their trees being generally of a light porous texture. The *skcura*, a new genus, which grows on the shore of the Red Sea, is so soft that it is entirely useless. The *el atl*, which abounds in Nejed, resembles the oak, and is employed in the construction of houses. The *samar*, *surch*, *salem*, *wahat*, and *kathad*, serve only for firewood; their leaves afford shelter for the cattle, and form the chief nourishment of the camels.

*Fruit-trees.*—Most of the fruit-trees reared in the gardens and hot-houses of Europe are indigenous to Arabia. The apple, pear, peach, apricot, almond, quince, citron, pomegranate, lemon, orange, olive, mulberry, and filberts, are to be met with in the wadis and irrigated plains, from the borders of the Dead Sea to the Euphrates and the shores of Oman.\* The Arabs likewise eat the fruit of several common shrubs, such as *Asclepias* and the *Rhamnus*; but they have a species of pear and a cornel peculiar to themselves. From common oranges, cut through the middle while green, dried in the air, and steeped forty days in oil, they prepare an essence famous among old women for restoring a fresh black colour to gray hairs.† Though wine is forbidden, they plant vines, and have a great variety of grapes, a small kind of which, without stones, called *zebib* or *kischmis*, they dry and export in

\* Burckhardt doubts whether apples or pears grow in Arabia (Travels, p. 367); but he seems to have forgotten that he mentions them elsewhere among the fruits in the garden of the convent at Mount Sinai. Niebuhr speaks of them as common in Yemen.—Tome iii. 130.

† From the name *Portughan*, given to the orange both in Arabia and Italy, travellers and naturalists have supposed that it was brought into Europe by the Portuguese. This is a mistake. The orange was cultivated by the Arabs in Sicily and Spain many centuries before the Portuguese visited the East.—See p. 119 of this volume. Cod. Diplom. Arab. Sicil., tome i. p. 114.

considerable quantities. They also prepare from mint a syrup known by the name of *dubs* or *debs*, which they find a lucrative article of commerce.

The Banians have imported many fruit-trees from India, which have all become naturalized in their adopted country ; such are the banana (*Musa*, Linn.), the mango (*Mangifera indica*, Linn.), the papaya (*Carica papaya*, Linn.), a *Cissus*, an excellent counterpoison, the cocoa, and the Indian fig-tree (*Ficus religiosa*). The singular property that the latter possesses of propagating itself by means of filaments shooting from its boughs, which take root on reaching the ground and spring up into new trunks, is well known. Forskal saw more than a dozen species of fig-trees, not one of which are mentioned by Linnaeus ; but their fruit was far from being agreeable, and seldom eaten as food. The bark of one species was used in tanning leather ; and the leaves of another were so rough that they served for cleaning and polishing iron. At Beit el Fakih he found some fine ornamental trees, which he supposed to be of Indian origin ; but, as their characteristics were different from those of any other known species, he classed them in two new genera under the names of *Hypæanthera* and *Binectæiq* (*Mimusops obtusifolia* of botanists).

By far the most common and important of the palm tribe is the date-tree, the fruit of which constitutes the staple nourishment of the Arabs during the greater part of the year. In Hejaz the places chiefly renowned for this valuable production are the gardens of Medina, and the valleys at Safra and Sedeida on the route to Mecca. Almost every district, however, has its own variety, which grows nowhere else. Burckhardt was informed that upwards of a hundred different sorts grew in the immediate neighbourhood of Medina ; and a native historian in his description of that city has enumerated one hundred and thirty. The cheapest and most common kinds are the *jebeli*, the *heloua*, the *heleya*, a very small date not larger than a mulberry ; it has its name from its extraordinary sweetness, in which it equals the finest figs from Smyrna ; and, like them, when dried is covered with a saccharine crust. This was the date with which Mohammed is alleged to have performed a very great miracle, by planting a kernel in the earth, which instantly took root, grew up, and in five minutes became a full-

grown tree loaded with fruit. Another miracle is related of the species called *el syhani*, which hailed the Prophet as he passed under it with a loud Salaam Aleikoom ! The *birni* is esteemed the most wholesome and the easiest of digestion ; Mohammed, with whom it was a favourite, recommended the Arabs to eat seven of them every morning before breakfast. The *jebeli*, which is scarce, is about one inch in breadth, three in length, and has a very agreeable taste. The price of the *birni* is twenty paras, or  $2\frac{1}{2}$  d. per *keile* (a measure containing about 120 dates), while the *jebeli* are sold at the rate of eight for the same money. They are in great request with the hajjis, who always carry some of them home as presents to their friends : they are bought in small boxes holding about a hundred. One species of the Medina date remains perfectly green even when ripe and dried ; another retains a bright saffron colour. These are threaded on strings, and worn as ornaments by children, or sold under the name of *Kalayd es Sham*, or Necklaces of the North. Dates are dressed in a variety of ways ; they are boiled, stewed with butter, or reduced to a thick pulp by simmering in water, over which honey is poured. It is a saying of the Arabs, " that a good Housewife may furnish her husband every day for a month with a dish of dates differently prepared."

The many purposes to which almost every part of this tree is applied have been mentioned by several travellers. The timber serves for rafters or firewood, the fibres for cordage, and the leaves for cages, boxes, bedsteads, baskets, cradles, and other articles of the hurdle species. The Hejazecs, like the Egyptians, make use of the leaves, the outer and inner bark, and the fleshy substance at the root of the leaves where they spring from the trunk. The kernels, after being soaked for two days in water until they become soft, are given as food to camels, cows, and sheep, instead of barley, and are said to be much more nutritive than that grain. In Nejed the kernels are ground for the same purpose ; but this is not done in Hejaz. At Medina there are shops where nothing else is sold but date-stones ; and in all the main streets beggars are occupied in picking up those that are thrown away. The fruit does not all ripen at the same time, each species having its particular season. The harvest at Medina continues for two or three months (from July till September), but dates are eaten by the beginning of June. This



epoch is expected with as much anxiety, and attended with the same general rejoicings, as the vintage or the harvest-home in Europe. "What is the price of dates at Mecca or Medina?" is always the first question asked by a Bedouin who meets a passenger on the road. A failure of the crop, either from the ravages of the locusts or the exhaustion of the trees, which are seldom known to produce abundantly more than three or four successive years, causes a general distress, and spreads a universal gloom over the inhabitants. The process of impregnating this tree artificially, by scattering the pollen over the female flowers, is still practised by the modern Arabs, exactly as described by Pliny and Ammianus. The date-groves around Medina are cultivated by farmers, called *nowak-hele*, who were assessed by the Wahabees according to the number of trees in each field. For every *erdeb* of dates the Nejed tax-gatherers levied their quota either in kind or in money according to the current market-price. At Safra the plantations, which extend to four miles in length, belong partly to the inhabitants of the village and partly to the neighbouring Bedouins (the Beni Salem). Every small grove is enclosed by a mud or stone wall, and interspersed with hamlets or low insulated huts. The trees pass from one individual to another in the course of trade; they are sold singly, according to their respective value, and often constitute the dowry paid by the suitor to the girl's father on marrying her. The sand is heaped up round their roots, and must be renewed every year, as it is usually washed away by the torrents from the hills, which sometimes form a brook twenty feet broad and three or four deep. Here the Wahabees imposed heavy assessments, taxing not only the produce of the groves and gardens, but the very water used in irrigating them. In Wady Feiran Burckhardt mentions the *jamya* as the best species, of which the monks of Sinai send large boxes annually to Constantinople as presents, after having taken out the kernel and put an almond in its place. Among these date-groves he observed several doum-trees, as well as in other parts of the peninsula. They belong to the Tebna Arabs, and during the five or six weeks of harvest the valley is crowded with people, who erect temporary huts of palm-branches, and pass their time in great conviviality. At Dahab the plantations have a very different appearance from those in Hejaz. The lower branches, in-

stead of being taken off annually, are suffered to remain, and hang down to the ground, forming an almost impenetrable barrier round the tree, the top of which only is crowned with green leaves.

*Mannu.*—The true nature and origin of this substance, celebrated as the miraculous food of the Israelites, have not yet been very satisfactorily ascertained. The observations made by travellers and naturalists do not accord with the Scripture narrative, nor do they afford any explanation of the phenomena as recorded by Moses (Exod. xvi., Numb. xi.) That it is a vegetable production is generally admitted. Rauwolf has described a thorny plant called *algul* which yields a species of manna; and Michaelis mentions another under the name of *alhage*. Niebuhr neglected to inquire after this substance, and what he heard from a monk near Suez was an idle legend not worth repetition. He was told that in Mesopotamia manna is produced by several trees of the oak genus; that it covers the leaves like flour, and is obtained by shaking the branches. July or August are the months in which it is gathered, and it is found in greater abundance in moist than in dry seasons. When fresh it is white and saccharine, but it melts in the sun. At Bussora this traveller was shown another species called *taranjubil*, which is gathered from a prickly shrub near Ispahan: the grains were round and yellowish. Both of these sorts were used by the inhabitants as sugar in preparing several dishes, especially pastry. Hurckhardt is clearly of opinion that the manna of Scripture is that which distils from the *tarfu* or tamarisk-tree, a shrub abounding in the peninsula of Sinai. This remarkable fact; he observes, remained unknown in Europe until it was first mentioned by Seetzen. It is called *mann* by the Bedouins, and accurately resembles that described by the Jewish historian.\* In the month of June it drops from the prickles of the tamarisk upon the fallen leaves and twigs, which always cover the ground beneath the branches, in its natural state. The

\* Josephus derives the name from the Hebrew participle *man*, which, he says, means *What is it?* this being the exclamation of the Jews when they first beheld that divine and wonderful food. (Antiq. b. iii. c. 1.) Whiston, in a note on the text, rather thinks it comes from the verb *mannah*, to divide; and mentions that in an old heathen writer, Artapanus, it is compared "to oatmeal, and like snow in colour."

Arabs collect it in the morning, when it is coagulated, but it dissolves as soon as the sun shines upon it. They clean away the leaves and dirt which adhere to it; and, after being boiled, it is strained through a coarse piece of cloth and put into leathern skins, in which it is preserved till the following year. They do not seem to make it into cakes or loaves; but they dip their morsel into it, or pour it as they do honey over their unleavened bread. It is found only in seasons when copious rains have fallen, and sometimes it is not produced at all. When kept in a cool temperature it is hard and solid, but becomes soft if held in the hand or exposed to the sun. The colour is a dirty yellow; but the taste is agreeable, somewhat aromatic, and sweet as honey. If eaten in considerable quantities it is said to be slightly purgative. The Bedouins esteem it as the greatest dainty which their country affords: the produce, however, even in the best years, is trifling, perhaps not exceeding 500 or 600 pounds. The harvest is usually in June, and lasts about six weeks. Though the tamarisk abounds in Hejaz, on the Euphrates, and in every part of Arabia, Burckhardt never heard of its yielding manna except in Mount Sigai. He was informed that in Asia Minor near Erzeroum, the kind mentioned by Niebuhr, was still collected from the tree which produces the galls; but this is probably the gum-tragacanth, which is obtained from a spinous shrub of the genus *Astragalus*, and which is so strong that a drachm will give to a pint of water the consistency of a syrup. This gum is indigenous in Natolia, Crete, and Greece. There is, however, a confusion in his different accounts of the manna, which he appears sometimes to have mistaken for other vegetable substances. The modern officinal drug sold under this name comes from Italy and Sicily, where it is obtained from a species of ash, with a leaf resembling that of the acacia. The Calabrian manna is said to exude after the puncture of an insect,—a species of grasshopper that sucks the plant; and this fact led Michaelis to propose the question to the Danish travellers, whether the Arabian species might not be produced in a similar manner. But notwithstanding the identity of the name, the resemblance in the description, and the concurrence of learned naturalists, it is impossible to reconcile the manna of Scripture with any species of vegetable gum, much less to explain the preternatural circumstances connected with its appear-

ance. We are expressly told that it was rained from heaven ; that it lay on the ground when the dew was exhaled, round and small as the hoar-frost, like coriander-seed, and its colour like a pearl ; that it fell but six days in the week ; that it became offensive and bred worms if kept above one day ; that the double quantity provided for the Sabbath kept sweet for two days ; that it continued falling for forty years, but ceased on the arrival of the Israelites at the borders of Canaan. These and other facts all indicate the extraordinary nature of the production ; and in no one respect do they correspond with the distillations of the tarfa, the gharrab, or the talh-tree. These gums are collected only for about a month in the year ; they do not admit of being ground in a hand-mill, nor baked ; they are not subject to putrefaction if kept, nor are they peculiar to the Petræan wilderness ; besides, the constant and daily supply in a desert often barren of all vegetation must have been impossible, except on the supposition, that the trees accompanied them on their march. Whatever the manna was, it was obviously a substitute for food ; and the peculiarities connected with its regular continuance, its corruption, and periodical suspension, are facts not less extraordinary than the mysterious nature of the substance itself. It is in vain to attempt any explanation of these phenomena by natural causes. A sceptical philosophy may succeed in reconciling preternatural appearances with its own notions of probability ; but this gives not a particle of additional evidence to the credibility of the sacred narrative. The whole miracle, as related by Moses, admits but of one solution—the interposition of a Divine power. As for local traditions or modern practices, these, we have already shown, are unsafe guides in matters of history ; much less can they be admitted as authorities in support of revealed truth.

*Gum-Arabic.*—According to Burckhardt this substance is the produce of the talh, which he calls the gum-arabic-tree. In describing Wady Lahyane, between Akaba and Gaza, he says that the Bedouins feed their camels upon the thorny branches of this shrub, of which they are extremely fond. In summer they collect the gum, which they sell at Cairo for about 12s. or 15s. per cwt. The taste he represents as insipid, but he was assured it was very nutritive. Of this latter fact Hasselquist mentions a striking confirmation, in the case of an Abyssinian

caravan crossing the African desert to Cairo in 1750. Finding their provisions consumed while they had yet sixty days to travel, they had recourse to gum-arabic, of which they carried a considerable quantity with them; and upon this alone 1000 persons subsisted for two months. Burckhardt, however, in another place says, that in Wady Nebk he found the acacia-trees thickly covered with this gum, which the Towara tribe sell at Cairo, though its quality is inferior to that from Sennaar or Soudan. The Bedouins use it as a substitute for water. Some have supposed the gum-arabic-tree to be the *Acacia vera* (the *Mimosa Nilotica*, Linn.), which Hasselquist says the Egyptian Arabs call *charrad* (perhaps the *gharrab* of Burckhardt), and which he represents as also producing the *thus* or frankincense, and the *Succus acaciae*. The *thus* he describes as pellucid and white, or rather colourless; while the gum is of a brownish or dirty yellow. This exactly agrees with the accounts given of the manna; hence it is probable these substances are pearly, if not altogether, identical. In collecting the leaves of the acacia for the use of their camels, the Bedouins spread a straw mat under the tree, and beat the boughs with long sticks, when the youngest and freshest buds are brought down; and these are sold in the markets as fodder.

*Honey* is an article much used in Arabian cookery, and found in various districts of the country. The mountains near Safra swarm with bees, of which the Bedouins take possession by placing wooden hives upon the ground. This honey is of the finest quality, white, and clear as water. One of the most interesting productions of Wady Ghor is the beyrouk honey (the *Assal beyrouk* of the Arabs), which Burckhardt supposed to be manna. It was described to him as a juice dropping from the leaves and twigs of the gharrab-tree, about the height of an olive, with leaves like those of the poplar, only somewhat broader. The honey is sweet when fresh, but turns sour when kept for two days. It is gathered in May and June, either from the leaves, on which it collects like dew, or from the ground under the tree. The colour is brownish, or rather of a grayish hue.

*Shrubs*.—The deserts and mountains of Arabia produce a variety of shrubs, with the uses and qualities of which we are but imperfectly acquainted, and many of their names might have remained utterly unknown had they

not been accidentally noticed by the passing traveller. Several new genera were discovered by Forskal, but he had little opportunity for examining their properties. Of the *mærua*, *kadaba*, and *masa*, nothing particular has been recorded. The fruit of the *sadada* is eaten; and from the berry of the *kebatha* is extracted a very strong kind of brandy, the acid taste of which is counteracted by a mixture of sugar. *Dolichos*, a species of that false phaseolus already mentioned, grows up to a bushy shrub, so as to form hedges in a short time which are almost impenetrable. The wood of the *Cynanchum*, called *march* by the Arabs, is used for fuel; it has all the lightness and combustibility of tinder; and Forskal observed that the peasants near Loheia kindled it by rubbing one piece against another. The *nebek* (*Rhamnus Lotus*), the fruit of which the Arabs sometimes eat in preference to dates, is very common in the plain of Medîna; large quantities of it are exposed in the market, where a person may obtain enough to satisfy himself for a pennyworth of corn, which is readily taken in exchange instead of money. The inhabitants of Wady Feiran grind the dried fruit together with the stone, and preserve the meal, which they call *bryse*, in leathern skins in the same way as the Nubian Bedouins do. It forms an excellent provision for journeying in the desert, as it only requires the addition of buttermilk to make a most nourishing, pleasant, and refreshing diet. Among the rocks of Mount St Catherine, Burckhardt observed, besides other shrubs, the *Serour* nearly in full bloom; its fruit is about the size of a small cherry, and has very much the flavour of the strawberry. In Wady Mousa junipers grow in considerable numbers. The tamarisk and talh-tree abound in the same region. The tree called *asheyr* by the Arabs is very common in Wady Ghor. It bears a fruit of a reddish yellow colour, about three inches in diameter, which contains a white substance resembling the finest silk, and enveloping the seeds. The Bedouins collect this stuff, and twist it into matches for their muskets, preferring it to the common match, as it ignites more readily. Burckhardt says that more than twenty camel-loads of this substance could be annually procured, and perhaps might be found useful in the silk and cotton manufactures of Europe. This tree, when incisions are made into the branches, yields a white juice, which the natives collect,

by putting a hollow reed into the aperture, and sell to the druggists at Jerusalem, who are said to use it in medicine as a strong cathartic. In the gardens of Medina the *ithel*, a species of tamarisk, is cultivated for its hard wood, of which the Arabs make camels' saddles, and every utensil that requires strong handles. The burial-grounds round Mecca are adorned with a low shrub of the aloe genus called *sabber* (or patience), which is planted at the extremity of almost every tomb opposite the epitaph. It is an evergreen, requiring very little water; and is chosen for this purpose in allusion to the patience necessary in waiting for the resurrection. Of the *Mimosa* genus there are several species in Arabia. One of these (*Mimosa selem*), produces splendid flowers of a beautiful red colour, with which the natives crown their heads on festive occasions. The flowers of another (*Mimosa Lebbeck*; *Acacia Lebbeck*, Linn.) are no less remarkable for a fine silky tuft formed by their pistils. There is another so sensitive that it droops its branches whenever any person approaches it, appearing to salute those who retire under its shade. This mute hospitality has so endeared it to the Arabs, that the injuring or cutting of it down is strictly prohibited. The pod of the *syale* and the tender shoots of the branches serve as fodder for cattle, while the bark is used in tanning leather. The leaves of the *Mimosa orfora* (*Acacia horrida*, Linn.) preserve camels' milk sweet for several days; the smoke of the wood is said to expel a worm, which fixes itself in the flesh of the human neck and produces epileptic fits. The tamarisk is cultivated as an object equally useful and agreeable; its shade is a protection from the scorching heat of the sun; and its graceful figure adorns the scenery of the country. It is one of the most common productions of the desert from Mecca to the Euphrates, and in the driest season, when all vegetation around is withered, it never loses its verdure.

The *balsam* or celebrated balsam of Mecca (the balm of Gilead in Scripture) has been already noticed in the Botany of Abyssinia. According to Burckhardt; Safra and Bedr are the only places in Hejaz where it can be obtained in a pure state. The tree from which it is collected (called by the Arabs *beshem*) grows on Gebel Sobh and the neighbouring mountains, and is said to be from ten to fifteen feet high, with a smooth trunk and thin bark. In the middle of summer small incisions are made in the

rind ; from these the juice immediately issues, which is then taken off with the thumb-nail and put into a vessel. The gum appears to be of two kinds ; one of a white colour, which is most esteemed, the other of a yellowish-white. The latter, which the Bedouins bring to market in small sheepskin bottles, has a bitter taste and a strong turpentine smell. The people of Safra generally adulterate it with sesamum-oil and tar. When they try its purity, they dip their finger into it and apply it to the fire ; if it burn without giving pain or leaving a mark, they judge it to be of good quality ;—if otherwise, they consider it bad. The test mentioned by Bruce of letting a drop fall into a cup of water, when the good falls coagulated to the bottom and the bad swims on the surface, is unknown to the Hejazees. The Bedouins who sell it to the Safra Arabs demand two or three dollars a-pound for it when quite genuine ; while the latter dispose of it to the hajjis, chiefly the Persians, in an adulterated state, at five or six times the prime cost. The richer classes put a drop into the first cup of coffee which they drink in the morning, from a notion that it acts as a tonic. That which is sold at Mecca and Jidda, for the Cairo market, always undergoes several adulterations. The seeds are employed to procure abortion, but the balm itself is used medicinally, and highly valued in the harems on account of its cosmetic qualities. Forskal, who gives a botanical description of this tree as a new species of *Amyris*, found one of them in the open fields. Its appearance was not beautiful ; but what seems very remarkable is, that the inhabitants of Yemen, according to his account, were ignorant of its qualities. They only burn the wood as a perfume in the same manner as they do the *kafal*, another sort of *Amyris*, which is exported to Egypt, and there used as fuel, to communicate an agreeable odour to the vessels and the liquors which are boiled in them.

*Gharkad* (the *Pegnum retusum* of Forskal), a thorny shrub, bearing a small red berry about the size of a pomegranate-seed, is common in the peninsula of Sinai, especially in Wady Gharendel. It comes to maturity in the height of summer, and surprises the traveller by the delicious refreshment which it affords in the parched and solitary wilderness. The fruit is juicy and pleasant, much resembling a ripe gooseberry in taste, but not so sweet ; and when the crop is abundant the Arabs make



a conserve of the berries. This is the shrub which Burckhardt supposes might have been used by Moses to sweeten the bitter waters of Marah (Exod. xv. 25); but as he made no inquiries on the spot his supposition rests on mere conjecture.

Another shrub, of high celebrity in the East as an article for the toilette, is the henna-tree (*Lawsonia inermis*, Linn.), whose leaves and odoriferous flowers, when pulverized and wrought into a paste, are universally used by the ladies for staining the face, hands, feet, and nails, of a reddish or yellowish colour; lighter or deeper according to the manner in which this fashionable pomatum is applied. The tincture requires to be frequently renewed. This shrub, which in size and character resembles privet, is very abundant in Wady Fatima, and sold to the hajjis at Mecca in small red leathern bags. A species of *Glycyrrhiza*, or liquorice-shrub, is common in Yemen, as is also a sort of caper-tree (*Capparis spinosa*, Linn.), which is reckoned the only antidote against the effects of a shrub (called *Adenia* by Forskal), whose buds, when dried and given in drink as a powder, are strongly poisonous. The rose-laurel (*Nerium*), the cotton-plant, the acacia, and various others, spring in the sandy plains, and form scattered tufts of verdure in the cliffs of the barren rocks. The acacia being one of the largest and most common shrubs in the desert, Shaw conjectures that it must have been the *shittim-wood* of which the planks and several utensils of the tabernacle were made (Exod. xxv.) As it abounds with flowers of a globular figure, and of delicious fragrance, it is perhaps the same as the *shittah-tree*, which (Isaiah, xli. 19) is joined with the myrtle and other sweet-smelling plants. Of the cotton-tree Niebuhr mentions two species, one of which grows to some size, and the other bears red flowers. The profits from the culture of this article are inconsiderable, as most of the Arabs wear the cotton cloths of India and Egypt.

The incense-tree, so famous in all antiquity, is not once mentioned by Forskal: the travellers could learn nothing of it, except that it was to be found in a part of Hadramaut, where it is called *oliban*. The soil of the hills where it grows is said to be of a clayey texture, impregnated with nitre. Ibn Batuta, who visited Dabar and Hasec (A. D. 1328), says, "We have here the incense-tree, which is about the height of a man, with branches like those of the

artichoke ; it has a thin leaf, which, when scarified, produces a fluid like milk ; this turns into gum, and is then called *laban*, or frankincense." Some French naturalists suppose it to be *Boswellia dentata* of Roxburgh, which is described as growing to a considerable height on the mountains of Coromandel ;\* but this account does not agree with what the ancients say of the incense-tree. According to Lord Valentia, the frankincense is chiefly produced near Cape Guardafui, and is exported from a harbour of the Somaulies called Bunder Cassim. It forms an article of trade with the Red Sea, and is principally consumed in Catholic countries. As the natives hold their own produce in no estimation, and make use of that only which comes from India, we deem it unnecessary to add any farther remarks to what has been already said of this substance, as well as of myrrh, cassia, spikenard, with other resinous and aromatic plants, in treating of the commerce of the ancient Arabs. The name *thus*, by which it was known to the Greeks and Romans, was superseded in the decline of the Latin language by that of incense (*incensum*), from the universal practice of burning it in the temples of their gods.†

Coffee (*Coffea Arabica*) is a native of Abyssinia, and has been noticed among the vegetable productions of that country. That it was introduced into Yemen by the Abyssinian conquerors is highly probable ; and when the Koran prohibited the use of wine this supplementary drink would take its place, and propagate itself by degrees over the regions which embraced the creed of Islam. This supposition is not founded on mere conjecture. We learn from Poncet, who travelled in Ethiopia in 1698, that the opinion then universally prevalent in the East was, that coffee had been originally transported from that kingdom into Arabia Felix. The etymology of the name itself is a strong presumption that it was at first intended as a substitute for the juice of the grape. *Cahoueh* (or *cahveh*, as the Turks pronounce it with a *h*, whence our word *coffee* is derived) was used by the old Arabs, in its primary sense, to denote wine or other intoxicating liquors. It was afterwards applied to the de-

\* Nouveau Dictionnaire d'Hist. Nat. art. Encens. Roxburgh, Plants of Coromandel.

† Vol. i. chap. v. p. 178. Eutrop. Rer. Rom. lib. xi.

coction of the Abyssinian berry, to which they gave the name of *buun*, while they called the shrub on which it grew the *buun-tree*. The early Mohammedan authors furnish us merely with a few details about the supposed qualities of this liquid, and the disputes that occurred concerning its lawfulness as an article of diet. Avicenna, Ibn Jazlah of Bagdad, and some other professional writers of that time, speak obscurely of *buun*; hence we may presume that coffee, like sugar and chocolate, was then prescribed as a medicine. Its use, however, was long peculiar to the East; and the city of Aden is the first on record that set the example of drinking it as a common refreshment, about the middle of the fifteenth century. A drowsy mufti called Jemaleddin had discovered that it disposed him to keep awake, as well as to a more lively exercise of his spiritual duties. On his authority coffee became the most fashionable beverage in the place. The leaves of the *cat* (tea) were abandoned; and all classes,—lawyers, students, loungers, and artisans,—adopted the infusion of the roasted bean. Another discovery of the same individual rendered it still more popular. Having contracted some infirmity during a voyage to Persia, on returning to Yemen he applied to his favourite stimulant, and in a short time found his health perfectly restored. This pious doctor, to whom Europe perhaps owes one of the most useful luxuries of the East, died A. D. 1470; and such was the reputation which his experience had given to the virtues of coffee, that in a short time it was introduced by Fakeddin at Mecca and Medina, and became so agreeable to the general taste, that public saloons were opened, where crowds assembled to enjoy the amusements of chess, singing, dancing, gambling, and other recreations not very consistent with the rigour of the Koran.

About the beginning of the 16th century it was brought by certain dervises of Yemen to Cairo, where its qualities recommended it to general use. But the innovation of drinking it in the mosques gave rise to a bitter controversy, which seemed to threaten the East with a new revolution. In the year 1511, it was publicly condemned at Mecca by an assembly of muftis, lawyers, and physicians, who declared it to be contrary to the law of the Prophet, and alike injurious to soul and body. The pulpits of Cairo resounded with the anathemas of the more orthodox divines; all the magazines of this "seditious berry" were

laid in ashes; the saloons were shut, and their keepers pelted with the fragments of their broken pots and cups. This occurred in 1523; but by an order of Selim I. the decrees of the muftis were reversed; the tumults both in Egypt and Arabia were quashed; the drinking of coffee was pronounced not to be heretical; and two Persian doctors, who had declared it to be pernicious to the health, were hanged by order of the sultan. From Cairo this contested liquor passed to Damascus and Aleppo, and thence to Constantinople (in 1554), where it encountered and triumphed over the persecution of the dervises, who declaimed vehemently against the impiety of human beings eating *charcoal*, as they called the bean when roasted, which their Prophet had declared was not intended by God for food.

From the Levant it found its way by degrees to Europe, and was probably imported by the Dutch and Venetian merchants. Pietro della Valle, who travelled in 1615, seems the first that made it known in Italy. Mons. Thevenot, on his return from the East in 1657, brought it with him to France as a curiosity, though it appears to have been used privately at Marseilles ten years earlier; and in 1679 the medical faculty of that city made its deleterious effects the theme of a public disputation. The first coffee-house opened in Paris was in 1672, by an Armenian named Pascal (or Pasqua), who sold this beverage at 2s. 6d. a-cup; but the want of encouragement obliged him to remove to London. The government of Charles II. attempted in vain to suppress these places of entertainment as nurseries of sedition; and in a few years they became general throughout the country. The first European author that wrote expressly on coffee was Prospero Alpino, a celebrated botanist and physician of Padua, who resided at Cairo in 1580. It is not mentioned by Belon, who has described the most remarkable plants of Egypt and Arabia (A. D. 1546-49). Lord Bacon, who died in 1626, and Dr John Ray, both speak of it; but in a manner which shows that they had a very superficial knowledge of the subject. Its qualities, however, were soon afterwards celebrated both by naturalists and poets. Della Valle insisted that it was the nepenthe of Homer, while Mons. Paschius alleged that it was among the articles presented to David by Abigail. In France it became a theme for the dramatic muse; and in 1694, *Le*

*Café* was the most fashionable comedy in Paris. A national song under the same name was written by Fuze-  
lier, and set to music by Bernier. The following stanza  
will suffice as a specimen :—

“Favorable liqueur, dont mon ame est ravie,  
Par tes enchantemens augmente nos beaux jours ;  
Nous domptons le sommeil par ton heureux secours :  
Tu nous rend les momens qu’il dérobe à la vie.  
Favorable liqueur, dont mon ame est ravie,  
Par tes enchantemens augmente nos beaux jours.”

The method of roasting and sweetening it, and the praises  
of the cups and saucers into which it was poured, were  
sung in a heroic poem by a Jesuit of the name of Father  
Vanière, who thus speaks in the eighth book of his *Præ-  
dium Rusticum* :—

“Tritaque mox validis intra mortaria pilis,  
Diluitur lymphæ ; faciliq[ue] parabilis arte  
Vulcano coquitur, donec vas pulvis ad imum,  
Venerit, et posito mansuerit ollula motu.  
Fictilibus rufis pateris defunde liquores,  
Adde peregrina dulces ab arundine succos,  
Ora sapore castræ ne tristitia lædat amaro.”

This shrub has long maintained a vast importance as an  
article of commerce ; and though it has been transplanted  
to various countries in Asia, Africa, and America, its  
chief celebrity is derived from Arabia, where its cultiva-  
tion seems to be best understood. It appears originally  
to have grown wild in Abyssinia, where the natives were  
in the habit of eating the bean as food. They roasted  
and pounded it, and then mixed the powder with grease  
or butter to give it consistency. A small quantity of  
this preparation was sufficient to support them during a  
march of several days. In Upper Egypt this practice is  
still common. Reynier often saw the soldiers prefer this  
mixture to their rations when they had long fasts to  
support ; facts which leave no doubt as to the nutritive  
qualities of coffee.

In Arabia the fruit of the tree, when allowed to grow  
wild, is so bad as to be unfit for use. It is only in  
certain parts of that country that the soil is adapted for  
its production. Burckhardt was informed, that it does  
not grow farther north than Mishnye, in the district of  
Zohra, and that it improves in quality towards the south.  
The plantations are found to thrive best on the western

side of the great mountains of Yemen. They abound in the provinces of Heschid-u-Bekil, Kataba, and Jafa; but the climate about Udden, Kahhune, Kusma, Jebi, Jobla, and Taas, is reckoned the most favourable, as the shrub on these hills yields the berry in greater quantity and of better flavour. The coffee produced in the neighbourhood of Sanaa is esteemed the best. Europeans are mistaken in supposing the tree should be planted in a dry soil, and under a torrid sun. Though it is cultivated only in the hilly regions, it requires both moisture and coolness; and it is for this reason that the Arabs plant other trees in their coffee-grounds in order to afford it shade. In times of intense heat the plantations are regularly irrigated; which is the more easily done, as they usually stand upon terraces in the form of an amphitheatre, where they are so densely crowded that the rays of the sun can hardly penetrate among the branches. Most of them are only moistened by the rain; but others have the benefit of large reservoirs (*birkets*) upon the heights, from which water is conveyed and sprinkled over the steep declivities. The coffee-shrub is an evergreen; its average height is from twelve to fifteen feet; the branches are elastic, the bark rough and of a whitish colour, the flowers resemble those of the jasmine, and though bitter to the taste they diffuse a strong balmy fragrance. At Bulgosa, Niebuhr found the trees in full bloom in the beginning of March, and the whole atmosphere perfumed with their delicious odour. When the blossom dies the fruit appears in its place, green at first, but red and resembling a cherry when ripe; in the centre of which lies the bean, enclosed in a thin membrane, and easily separated into two halves. There are two or three crops in the year; and it is quite common to see fruit and flowers on the same tree; but the first produce is always the best. May is the proper harvest month; the berries are shaken from the branches on cloths spread underneath; they are then dried in the sun; after which a heavy roller of wood or stone is passed over them, to separate the bean from the husk.\* All the Arabs are extravagantly fond of coffee;

---

\* In the West Indies this operation is performed by a mill composed of two wooden rollers furnished with iron-plates eighteen inches long and ten or twelve in diameter. These moveable rollers are made to approach a third which is fixed, called *chops*; between these the fruit falls from a hopper, where it is stript of its first skin,

yet less of it is drunk in Yemen than in the other provinces. The flavour is greatly improved by their mode of preparing it: instead of grinding the beans in a mill, they pound them to an impalpable powder in a close mortar, which seems better to express and preserve from evaporating those oily particles that give the decoction its peculiar relish. They also use a preparation from the husks, called *café à la sultane*, which is made by pounding and roasting them, and is esteemed an excellent beverage. The greatest care is taken of the powdered coffee, which is kept closely pressed down in a wooden box, and the quantity required for use is scraped from the surface with a wooden spoon. Two small pots are often used; in the one the water is boiled (generally mixed with the remains of the preceding meal); into the other is put the fresh coffee, and it is sometimes heated by standing near the fire before the boiling water is added. This latter mixture is then boiled two or three times; care being taken to pour a few drops of cold water upon it the last time, or to place over it a linen cloth dipped in cold water. After this process it is allowed to subside, and then emptied into the pot containing the boiling water. All classes use it without milk or sugar; people of rank drink it out of porcelain cups; the lower sort are content with coarser ware. In Hejaz it is served up to travellers in small earthen pots like bottles, containing from ten to fifteen cups. This vessel has a long narrow neck, with a bunch of dry herbs stuck into its mouth, through which the liquor is poured. At Mocha, Mrs Cushington observed that every lady, when she pays a visit, carries on her arm a little bag of coffee, which is boiled at the house where she spends the evening; and in this way she can enjoy society without putting her friends to expense. The Bedouin cooks this meal in the same rude manner that he does his cakes and his mutton. He roasts a few beans on an iron shovel, hammers them to atoms in a

---

and divided into two parts. Out of this machine it falls into a brass sieve, which separates it from the husks. It is then thrown into a vessel full of water, where it soaks for one night, and is afterwards thoroughly washed and dried. Another machine called the *peeling-mill*, which is a wooden grinder turned vertically upon its axis by a mule or horse, is employed to strip the thin pellicle from the bean; and after this process it is winnowed by slaves, who set the air in motion by turning rapidly four tin-plates fixed upon an axle.

wooden mortar with his bludgeon, and boils his pot between two stones, over a fire lighted with tinder and composed of dry shrubs or camels' dung.

---

#### SECTION IV.—ZOOLOGY.

*Wild Animals.*—The zoology of Arabia differs but little from that of other Eastern countries. Most of the animals found there being described in works which are familiar to the reader, it will not be necessary here to enter into any lengthened details on their natural history. Lions, leopards, panthers, lynxes, wolves, foxes, boars, antelopes, and various domestic animals in a wild state, are to be met with in almost every district in the peninsula. The small panther (called *fath*) is more common than the large one (the *nemer* of the Arabs); but it is not regarded with the same terror, as it only carries away cats and dogs, never venturing to attack man. It is the *Felis jubata* or hunting-tiger of naturalists. The jackall (*Æ. navi*) abounds in the mountains; but its habits and appearance are too well known to require particular notice. The hyena inhabits the solitary caverns of the Petrean range, and is also common round the shores of the Persian Gulf. It assails men and beasts with the same ferocity: stealing out at night, it seizes on the natives who sleep in the open air, and frequently carries off children from beside their parents. In the forests of Yemen, and on the hills around Aden, are swarms of monkeys without tails, and whose hind quarters are of a bright red. They are extremely docile, and learn readily any tricks that are attempted to be taught them. On this account vast numbers of them are exported to Egypt, Persia, and Syria, where itinerant jugglers make a livelihood by exhibiting them to the people. The sandy plains, and the valleys of the mountains, are stocked with gazelles. So common is this beautiful creature, that as a beast of chase it furnishes amusement and food for the Arabs of the desert, and supplies the poets with many of their finest similitudes. On the eastern frontier there are several places allotted for the hunting of this animal, enclosed with a high wall. Gaps are left, with a broad ditch on the outside, where they are caught in hundreds while attempting to escape. The rock-goats (*Capra Ibeæ*, the steinbok or bouquetin of the



Swiss) abound in the alpine districts, especially among the cliffs of Sinai, where they are hunted by the Bedouins. Their flesh is excellent, and has nearly the same flavour as that of deer. In the plains dogs are employed to catch them; but among the rocks it is difficult to come near them, as they occasionally take a leap of twenty feet, and are so keen scented, that on the slightest change of wind they smell the pursuer at a great distance, and take to flight. They pasture in herds of forty or fifty together, having a leader who keeps watch; and on any suspicious sound, odour, or object, he makes a noise, which is a signal to the flock to make their escape. The chase of the *beden*, as the wild-goat is called, resembles that of the chamois of the Alps, and requires as much enterprise and patience. Burckhardt was assured, that when hotly pursued they would throw themselves from a height of fifty or sixty feet upon their heads without receiving any injury. The Arabs make long circuits to surprise them, and endeavour to come upon them late, or early in the morning when they feed. Their skins are made into water-bags, and their long, large, knotty horns are sold to the merchants, who carry them to Jerusalem, where they are made into handles for knives and daggers.

Hares are plentiful, and hunted by the Arabs, who knock them down with small sticks or clubs, which they throw to a great distance, and with admirable dexterity. As the line of a caravan sometimes extends nearly a mile in length, they are often started in considerable numbers, and scarcely one of them ever escapes the shower of missiles to which they are exposed. The more orthodox, however, object to dress or eat them until they have undergone the operation of *hulaul*, or being made lawful;—a ceremony which is performed by cutting the throat with the neck turned towards the Holy City. Forskal mentions several wild animals of which he knew nothing except what he learned from the indistinct accounts of the natives. The *jaar* was said to resemble the ass in shape and size, and the flesh is reckoned excellent food. The *bakar'wash*, from the vague descriptions given by the Arabs, seemed to be the wild-ox. They mentioned another quadruped of a similar form, which was without horns, and fed only by night. One of the most singular of these anonymous animals was described as resembling a cat, which fed on grass and was eaten as a great deli-

cacy. The Bedouins of Sinai frequently mentioned to Burckhardt a beast of prey called *wober*, which inhabited only the retired parts of the desert; they represented it as being about the size of a large dog, with a head like a hog. He was told of another voracious creature called *shyh*, stated to be a breed between the leopard and the wolf, but their accounts as to this origin are not much to be trusted, their common practice being to assign parents of different known species to any animal which they seldom meet with. The *jerboa* or Pharaoh's Rat is to be found in great numbers in the sandy tracts among the hills, and on the banks of the Euphrates. Its appearance and manners have already been noticed in the Zoology of Abyssinia and Egypt. Its size is that of a large rat; the upper part is of a light-fawn colour striped with black; and this dusky hue contrasts agreeably with the fine shining white of the belly. The body is short,—broader behind than before, and well provided with long, soft, silky hair. According to Hasselquist the tail is three times longer than the whole body; Sonnini says he never found it much more than half its length. Its thickness hardly exceeds the circumference of a large goose-quill; but it is of a quadrangular and not of a round shape. The fore-legs, which have five toes, are white and short, scarcely extending beyond the hair; but they are less serviceable in walking than in conveying food to the animal's mouth, or digging his subterranean habitation; hence the name *dipus* or two-footed mouse, erroneously applied to the *jerboa*. The hind-legs are covered with white and fawn-coloured hair; but its long feet are almost entirely naked. Its motion, especially when pursued, is that of leaping and bounding like the kangaroo, which it performs with great rapidity, assisted by its long muscular tail. It is this peculiarity which induced naturalists to give this species the name of *Mus jaculus*, or flying-mouse. The flesh is eaten by the Arabs, and its taste is said to be very little different from that of a young rabbit.

*Domestic Animals.*—The Arabs rear in abundance all the domestic animals common to hot countries. They breed horses, mules, asses, camels, dromedaries, cows, buffaloes, hogs, sheep, and goats.\* Their cows and oxen

---

\* Strabo must have been misinformed when he excepted mules,

are distinguished by a hump or bunch of fat on the shoulder, immediately above the fore-legs. Those in Hejaz are described by Burckhardt as small, but of a stout bony make; they have for the most part only short stumps of horns, and bore a strong resemblance to those he had seen on the banks of the Nile in Nubia. Of the instinct ascribed to these animals, of forming into circular bodies to defend themselves against beasts of prey, Niebuhr could obtain no information, nor did he think the story probable. Buffaloes are found in all marshy parts of the country and on the banks of the rivers, where they are more numerous than the common horned cattle. The male is as fit for the yoke as the ox; his flesh is inferior, being hard and unsavoury; but when young it has much the taste and appearance of beef. The female yields more milk than the ordinary cow. The Arabs have a mode of forcing her to yield more than she would do voluntarily: while one person milks another tickles her;—a custom which the ancient Scythians practised with their mares.

*Asses.*—There are two sorts of asses in Arabia,—one small and sluggish, which is there as little esteemed as in Europe; the other a large and noble-spirited breed, which sells at a high price. Niebuhr thought them preferable to the horse for a journey, and reckoned their progress in half an hour equal to 3500 paces of a man. In Yemen, the soldiers use them on patrol, as well as in every military service in which parade is not an object; the pilgrims employ them in considerable numbers; and Ali Bey mentions, that they sometimes travel the distance from Jidda to Mecca (fifty-five miles) in twelve hours. In various parts of the country these animals abound in a wild state. \* To the northward of Nejed, adjoining the district of Jof, they are found in great numbers. The Sherarat Arabs hunt them and eat their flesh (though forbidden), but not before strangers. \* They sell their skins and hoofs to the pedlars at Damascus and the people of the Hauran. The hoofs are manufactured into rings, which are worn by the peasants on their thumbs or under the armpits as amulets against rheumatism.

---

horses, and hogs; as also geese and hens. "In Arabia pecorum, omnis generis copia, exceptis mulis, equis, et porcis; avium etiam omnium præter anseres et gallinas."—*Lib. xvi.*

\* Ibn Batuta says, that the flesh of the domestic ass was considered lawful in Oman, and publicly sold in the streets.—*Travels*, p. 62.

According to Buffon, the domesticated breed of asses used in Europe came originally from Arabia. The uniform aspect of this animal, when compared with the great variety of colour exhibited by the domestic races of the horse, has induced some to suppose that the former has not been so long nor so generally under the dominion of man. In the time of Aristotle the ass was not found in Thrace, nor even in Gaul; but, on the other hand, we know from the Sacred Writings, that it was used as a beast of burden in the remotest ages of Jewish history, and was therefore, in all probability, reduced to servitude by the Eastern nations fully more early than any other animal not immediately necessary to the existence of a pastoral people.\* Its comparatively recent reduction, then, cannot, as Buffon has alleged, be assigned as the cause of its greater uniformity of colour. This must be sought for in the different natures of the two animals when acted upon by the influence of climate, leading the one to vary only in form and stature, and the other in colour as well as form. The domestic ass of our northern climes being never improved by crosses from a purer race, the inferiority of the animal is scarcely to be wondered at. But under the warm and serene climates of Asia, where the breed is not only carefully tended, but frequently improved by intercourse with the fleet and fiery onager, it is an animal of great strength and considerable beauty.

The onager or wild-ass, called *koulan* by many of the tribes of Asia, is distinguished from the domestic kind by the greater length and finer form of its limbs, its straight chest, and somewhat compressed body. Its head is better put on and more erectly carried than in the common ass, and the ears, which are shorter by one-third, are slender and sharp pointed. The true source of our domestic race, though well known to the ancients, appears to have been lost sight of during the middle ages, and was indeed but obscurely known for some centuries after the revival of learning.\* We owe the best modern elucidation of its history, as we do that of several other species, to the researches of Pallas. The Romans were familiar with the

---

\* The first mention of mules is in the time of David, previous to which time asses seem to have been used for riding.\* The word rendered mules in Genesis, xxxvi. 24, signifies springs of water.

aspect of this animal. Julius Capitolinus, in the life of Gordian (in *Hist. August.*) observes, that that emperor brought up thirty onagers and as many wild-horses; and in the secular games of Philip, twenty of the former and forty of the latter were exhibited.

The Turkish name of the wild-ass, *Dagh Aischaki* or Mountain-ass, points out its natural locality:—"Whose house I have made the wilderness, and the barren land his dwellings.—The range of the *mountain* is his pasture, and he searcheth after every green thing."\* Even the choice which the domestic ass makes of the narrow and irregular paths by the wayside has been regarded as a remnant of natural instinct.† A good ass of Arabian origin sells, according to Chardin, for as high a sum as £18 sterling. That the breed is capable of supporting great fatigue was evinced by the young female mentioned by Pallas, which travelled from Astracan to Moscow attached to his post-chaise, with only an occasional night's repose. It afterwards proceeded in the same manner and without being incommoded by the journey, 700 wersts (464 miles) from Moscow to Petersburg.‡

*The Horse.*—Arabia has been called the native country of the horse; and certainly if the most valuable conquest of man over the animal creation be that of this noble quadruped, which shares with him the fatigues of industry and the glory of war,—no nation better merits that distinction than the Arabs. The care and affection which they bestow in breeding and rearing it, and the decided predilection with which it is constantly regarded, are founded not merely on its utility to them in their predatory and wandering life, but also on an ancient prejudice, which induces them to consider horses as beings endowed with generous sentiments and an intelligence superior to that of other animals. They suppose that these spirited creatures, so serviceable in the cause of Islam, have obtained, through Mohammed, the blessing of God and an occult capacity to read or repeat tacitly every day some verses of the Koran. It was one of their old proverbs, that, after man, the most eminent creature is the horse; the best employment is that of rearing it; the most delightful posture is that of sitting on its back; the most

\* Joh. xxix. 6.—8. † Dict. Class. d'Hist. Nat. t. iii. p. 563.

‡ Edinburgh Journal of Agriculture, No. VII.

meritorious of domestic actions is that of feeding it. They were taught by their Prophet to believe that it was originally predestined for their special service. "When God," said he, "wished to create it, he called the south wind, and said 'I desire to draw from out of thee a new being; condense thyself by parting with fluidity,'—and he was obeyed. He then took a handful of this element, now become tangible, and blew upon it, and the horse was produced. 'Thou shalt be for man,' said the Lord, 'a source of happiness and wealth; he will render himself illustrious by ascending thee.'" The "brood mares" were particularly recommended by Mohammed to his disciples, "because their back is the seat of honour, and their belly an inexhaustible treasure. As many grains of barley as are contained in the food we give to a horse, so many indulgences do we daily gain by giving it."

The care which the Arabs take in classifying and preserving the pedigrees of their horses, to a European must appear almost incredible. The collective term whereby they designate them in general is *Kohayl* or *Kochlani*; but they commonly distribute them into five great races, all originally from Nejed. Some authors trace them back to the most remote times of Paganism, assigning as their sire the famous stallion Mashour, the property of Okrar, chief of the Beni Obeida. Others assert that they are merely the issue of the five favourite mares of the Prophet, named Rhabda, Nooma, Waja, Sabha, and Hezma. Whatever be the fact as to these genealogies, history has certainly commemorated from a very ancient period the names and noble qualities of some of the Arabian horses. With the beautiful description of the war-steed in Job (chap. xxxix. 19—26) every reader is familiar: "His neck is clothed with thunder; and the glory of his nostrils is terrible: He paweth in the valley, and rejoiceth in his strength: He mocketh at fear; neither turneth he back from the sword: He swalloweth the ground with fierceness and rage, and smelleth the battle afar off." The famous racers Dahes and Ghabra have been already noticed (vol. i. p. 186), from which it would appear that the amusements of the turf were among the national festivals of the ancient Bedouins. D'Herbelot speaks of the *Kamel el Sanateyn*, an old work which treats of the keeping and physicking of horses. Another on the same subject, still more curious, bears the title of "Summary of all that can be desired to be learned re-

specting the different Races of Horses." According to the author of this treatise, all the breeds already alluded to sprung from a stallion and a mare, called *Zad al Ra'ceb* and *Serdet Shekban*, which belonged to Muthayer Ibn Oshaim, chief of one of the primitive tribes of Yemen. He has given a table which contains 136 races of Arabian horses,—three Persian, nine Turkoman, and seven Kurd,—and mentions the *Safenet* as being of the same species with those presented to Solomon by the Queen of Sheba. The modern Bedouins repose implicit faith in the traditions of antiquity, and still reckon their five noble breeds to be descended from the stud of the Prophet. The following are their names:—*Taueyse*, *Manekeye*, *Koheyl*, *Saklawye*, and *Julfa*; which, according to the vulgar notion, are derived from the different districts of Nejed, where they were born. These principal races diverge into innumerable ramifications. The *Saklawye* is subdivided into the *Jedran*, *Abriyeh*, and *Nejm el Subh*; the *Koheyl* into *Ajuz*, *Karda*, *Sheikha*, *Dabbah*, *Ibn Khueysha*, *Khumeyseh*, and *Abu Moarraff*; the *Julfa* has only a single branch, that of *Estemblath*. Besides these, they have various others of a secondary or less-esteemed breed, such as the *Henaudi*, *Abu Arkub*, *Abayan*, *Sheraki*, *Shueyman*, *Hadaba*, *Wedna*, *Medhemeh*, *Khabitha*, *Omeriah*, and *Sadathukan*. The different races have not any characteristic marks by which they can be distinguished from each other. Every mare particularly swift and handsome, with noble blood in her veins, may give origin to a new stock, the descendants of which are called after her; so that the catalogue of distinct races in the desert is almost endless. The only means of recognising them is by certificates of their genealogy, which are drawn up by the proprietors, and attested by witnesses: in these the issue, both masculine and feminine, are specified with great exactness; so that an Arabian horse offered for sale is usually provided with his title of nobility. The pedigree is often put into a small piece of leather covered with waxed cloth, and suspended round the animal's neck. Burckhardt has given one of these curious documents, which he translated from the original in the handwriting of the Bedouins. It is as follows:—

" GOD.

" Enoch.

" In the name of the most merciful God, the Lord of all

creatures, peace and prayers be with our Lord Mohamed and his family and his followers until the day of judgment; and peace be with all those who read this writing, and understand its meaning.

"The present deed relates to the grayish-brown colt, with four white feet and a white mark on the forehead, of the true breed of *Saklawye*, called *Obeyan*, whose skin is as bright and unsullied as milk, resembling those horses of which the Prophet said, 'True riches are a noble and pure breed of horses;' and of which God said, 'The war-horses, those which rushed on the enemy with full blowing nostrils,—those which plunge into the battle early in the morning.' And God spoke the truth in his incomparable book. This *Saklawye* gray colt was bought by *Khoshrun*, the son of *Emheyt*, of the tribe of *Zebaa*, an *Aeneze* Arab. The sire of this colt is the excellent Bay horse called *Merdjan*, of the breed of the *Kohéylan*; its dam is the famous white *Saklawye* mare known by the name of *Djeroua*. According to what we have seen we attest here, upon our hopes of felicity and upon our girdles, O Sheiks of Wisdom and Possessors of Horses! this gray colt, above mentioned, is more noble even than his sire and dam. And this we attest, according to our best knowledge, by this valid and perfect deed. Thanks be to God, the Lord of all creatures!—Written on the 16th of Saphar in the year 1223 (A. D. 1808). Witness," &c.

This purity of blood and descent the Bedouins are extremely careful to preserve uncontaminated. During twenty days, at a certain season, the mare must be watched to secure her from the approaches of any common horse, which she is not allowed to see even at a distance; for the Arabs are believers in the effects of imagination on the progeny of their cattle. When the foal is produced the same witnesses must be present, and within seven days a notarial certificate of its legitimacy is made out, in which is written an account of the colt's distinctive marks, with the names of its sire and dam. These genealogical tables, called *Hujeh*, never ascend to the granddams, because it is understood that every Arab of the tribe knows by tradition the purity of the whole breed. Nor are such testimonials at all necessary in the interior of the desert, where many horses are of such illustrious descent that thousands can attest their nobility.



A Bedouin would laugh at being asked by an inhabitant of Nejed for the pedigree of his mare; written evidence he never thinks of producing except when attending distant markets, such as Bussora, Bagdad, Damascus, Aleppo, Medina, or Mecca. A colt, at the moment of birth, is never allowed to drop upon the ground; they receive it in their arms, and so cherish it for several hours, washing and stretching its tender limbs, and caressing it as they would a baby. After this they place it on its legs, and watch its feeble steps with particular attention, prognosticating from that time its future excellencies or defects. The ears are tied together over its head with a string, that they may assume a fine pointed direction; the tail is pressed upwards, and other measures taken at the same time, in order that it may be carried high. The only care taken of the dam is to wrap a piece of linen cloth round her body, which is removed next day. At the end of a month the foal is weaned, and for the space of a hundred days thereafter it is permitted no other food than camels' milk. When that period has elapsed it receives a daily portion of wheat diluted with water. A handful only is given at first: by degrees this quantity is increased; although milk still continues to be its principal food. This diet continues a hundred days more; and when this second period has expired it is allowed to eat grass, and is fed on barley; receiving every evening, along with that provender, a bucket of camels' milk, should the tent happen to be well supplied with it. The Nejed Arab gives his colts neither barley nor wheat, but nourishes them with a paste of dates and water; and sometimes to a favourite he will give the fragments or leavings of his own meals. In that province horses are regularly fed upon dates; at Deraiah and in El Hassa the dates are mixed with *hirsim* or dried clover. The wealthier classes often give them flesh, raw as well as boiled; and sometimes before the commencement of a long journey they get roasted meat, that they may be the better able to endure the fatigue. A native of Hamah told Barckhardt, that in order to prevent a favourite horse from falling into the hands of the governor of that town, he fed it for a fortnight exclusively on roasted pork, which excited its mettle to such a degree that it became absolutely unmanageable; and could be no longer an object of desire to the avaricious functionary. In Egypt, vicious horses are

cured of the habit of biting by having a leg of mutton presented to them newly taken from the fire; the pain which the animal feels in seizing the hot meat with its teeth teaches it in a few lessons more gentleness of temper. The Arab steed, like its master, is accustomed to the inclemency of all weathers. During the whole year they are kept in the open air, being seldom taken into a tent even in the rainy season. The Bedouins never rub or clean their horses; but take care to walk them gently whenever they return after a ride. They generally rest in a standing position, and have been known to remain on their legs for years in succession without lying down. Yet with so little attention to health they are seldom ill. The most prevalent diseases are the gripes, farcy, warbles, surfeit, jaundice, strangles, mange, broken wind, and watery swellings upon the stomach. Burning is the most general remedy. To cure the strangles they rub the tumours with a paste made of barley, chaff, and butter; at the same time the smoke of a linen rag dyed with indigo is inhaled up the animal's nostrils, which occasions a copious discharge. In cases of surfeit they bleed the horse's feet, and wrap the skin of a sheep newly killed round its body. They have no use for farriers, except for making shoes, which are of a soft flexible iron, hammered cold, and very small, that the swiftness may not be impeded. They give different names both to fillies and colts every year until the age of four.\* In general they do not allow their mares to breed until they have completed their fifth year; but the poorer class sometimes wait no longer than the fourth, as they are eager for the profits arising from the sale of the foals. The colts are usually ridden after the completion of the second year, and from the time they are first mounted the saddle is but rarely taken off their backs. In winter a coarse sackcloth is thrown over them, and in summer they stand exposed to the mid-day sun.\* Their saddles are of wood, covered with Spa-

\* So extremely accurate are the Arabs in every thing relating to their horses, that they have invented appropriate names for distinguishing the several competitors in a race, according to their respective merits. Instead of saying the first, second, third, &c. as we do, they call the foremost the *outrunner of the outrunners*; the next the *back-pusher*; the third the *tranquilliser*; and this distinction they continue as far as the eleventh.

nish leather ; but they have no pomncls, instead of which they make use of stitched felt. The stirrups are very short, with flat square bottoms and sharp-pointed corners, which answer the purpose of spurs ; the slightest touch makes the animal fly like the wind, while the rider bears himself upon the stirrups that he may use his lance with greater vigour. The Nejed Bedouins have no other saddles than a stuffed sheep-skin ; they all ride without stirrups or bridles, guiding the horse merely with a halter. This is nowise surprising, when the extreme docility of the animal is considered,—without vice of any kind,—and more the friend and companion than the slave of his master. When not employed in war or travelling they loiter about the tents, often going over heaps of children lying on the ground, and carefully picking their steps lest they should hurt them. They allow themselves to be kissed and toyed with, or hugged round the neck, without doing the smallest injury. The different colours of Arabian horses are clear bay (*ahmar*), brown bay (*adhem*), sorrel (*ashekwar*), white (*abiad*), pure gray (*azrek*), mottled gray (*raktha*), bluish gray (*akhdar*), black (*udhem*), and dark chestnut (*ulmar muhruk*) : black and light bays (*aswad* and *ashehab*) are unknown in Arabia, and only found in Persia, Tartary, and Turkey.

In general these animals are of a middle size, of a slender delicate shape, light and active, rather lean than fat, but of surprising swiftness, and accustomed to the fatigue of long marches. They have small ears, little belly, and a short scanty tail. They are almost invariably free from apparent deformities, and so gentle that women or children may manage them. The physical qualities which the Arabs prize most in this animal are the following :—Neck long and arched, ~~head~~ small, —ears tapering and almost meeting at the points, —eyes large and full of fire, —lower jaw thin, —muzzle bare, —wide nostrils, —belly not too broad, —sinewy legs, —pasterns short and flexible, —hoofs hard and ample, —chest broad, —rump high and rounded. Whenever the three beauties of head, neck, and rump, are found combined, the horse is considered as perfect. There are several particular marks or natural signs which the Arabs regard as sinister and unfavourable ; while others are esteemed the reverse, and capable of producing happiness to the owner. They

reckon above twenty evil indications ; but the only bad effect they have on the animal is that of depreciating its value by two-thirds or more. The Persian and Turkoman horses, whose figures are much alike, differ from the Arabian in this, that they are more corpulent, and their coat is not so soft to the touch. It is, moreover, an opinion pretty generally received in the East, that the latter are specially distinguished from the others by the repugnance they evince towards clear water ; whilst that which is turbid pleases them to such a degree, that they never fail to prance about in any that happens to come in their way. The price of Arabian horses is variable, and often depends much on the caprice of the buyer and seller : in Syria, it fluctuates from £10 to £120. A good mare can scarcely be obtained under £60 ; and even at that price it is difficult to purchase one, as the Bedouins always prefer the females to the males for riding, because they are not accustomed to neigh, and thus expose them in their ambushes to the risk of detection. For a celebrated mare a sheik has been known to pay £200 ; sometimes the price has amounted to £500, and even to £800. The favourite mare of Saoud, named *Koraye*, which he constantly rode on his expeditions, was purchased from a Kalitan Bedouin for 1500 Spanish dollars. Kinneir states that £1200 was refused for one at Aleppo. At Bussora, where they form an important article of trade with India, the average price is about 300 rupees, though the cost is thrice, or even five times as much at Bombay or Calcutta. Over all Arabia, as also in Egypt and Syria, horses are possessed by several owners in partnership : each is divided into a number of shares (*kerat*), of which several may be purchased by a single individual. If an Aeneze has a mare of remarkable breed, he seldom or never consents to sell her without reserving one-half or two-thirds for himself. The ownership of the progeny is regulated by special compact : the fillies of the first or second years belong to the seller ; those of the subsequent years become the property of the buyer. This contract is called "selling the mare's belly ;" and in this manner most of the Arabian breeders are held in joint property. Sometimes the dam and her offspring are disposed of in equal shares, or on condition that the booty shall be equally divided between the original owner and the man who rides her. As the Bedouins are ignorant of those frauds by which a European jockey deceives his

customers, a stranger may take a horse on their word, a first sight or trial, without much risk of being cheated Niebuhr alleges that no instance of false testimony was ever given in respect to the descent of a horse,—the Arabs in his days, being persuaded that they and their families would be cursed should they prevaricate in giving an oath on a matter of such consequence; but the moderns do not scruple to tell falsehoods if they find they can make a better market by it. The affectionate terms in which families live with their horses, sometimes occasion extreme regret when they are obliged from necessity to sell them. D'Arvieux mentions a Syrian merchant who cried most tenderly while caressing his mare, whose genealogy he could trace for 500 years. Rubbing her with his shirt-sleeves, and wiping her forehead with his handkerchief, "My eyes," he would say to her, "my heart, must I be so unfortunate as to have thee sold to so many masters, and not to keep thee all myself? I am poor, my antelope; but I have brought thee up like my child: I never beat nor chid thee: God preserve thee, my dearest, from the looks of the envious; thou art pretty, thou art sweet, thou art lovely." It may be remarked, that the Arabs have great faith in certain superstitious charms, which they suppose will protect their horses from accidents. They use talismans written on a piece of triangular paper, which are put into a leathern purse of the same shape, and fastened round the animal's neck as a defence against witchcraft from unlucky eyes. A couple of boar's tusks, joined at the extremities by a silver ring, is suspended from their mane, to keep them from the farcy. Though the Arabs justly boast of their horses, it is a common error that supposes them to be very abundant in that country. In the Sacred Writings, and down to the times of Mohammed, they are seldom mentioned, camels being mostly used both in their warlike and predatory excursions. The Arab is limited to the desert pasture-ground, and it is there only that they survive, while the Bedouins are any. In Nebo, they are the rich plant of the desert, they become scarce as they become fewer, and being reckoned injurious to the soil of Oman is also deemed

BM3461

















